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CHARTING THE NATION'S COURSE: STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESSES IN THE 1952-53 "NEW LOOK" AND THE 1996-97 QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW

BY

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Preface

Major (Lieutenant Colonel select) Patrick M. ("Mike") Condray was commissioned through the Reserve Officer Training Corps, Texas A&M University in 1983. His initial assignment was to Fort Hood Army Installation, where he was assigned as the Staff Weather Officer (SWO) to the Sixth Cavalry Brigade (Air Combat) and the Second Armored Division. Major Condray also served as SWO to Joint Task Force Bravo (JTF-B) in Honduras in 1984. Following an Air Force Institute of Technology assignment, he served as a scientific analyst examining environmental effects on precision guided munition employment. Major Condray commanded the weather detachment at Anderson Air Force Base, Guam from 1990-92, where he was also designated SWO for Headquarters, 13th Air Force and the 633rd Air Base Wing. He then shifted theaters to a staff officer position with Headquarters, United States Air Forces in Europe at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Major Condray also served as the senior meteorological-oceanographic officer leading joint Air Force – Navy weather teams in support of United States European Command and North Atlantic Treaty Organization Joint/Combined Force Air Component Command operations. After his student year, Major Condray became an instructor at Air Command and Staff College teaching War Theory, War and Conflict Resolution, and Airpower & Campaign Planning.

Major Condray has a bachelor's degree in Meteorology from Texas A&M University and a master's degree in Meteorology from Saint Louis University. He is a distinguished

graduate of both Squadron Officers School and Air Command and Staff College. In June 1998, Major Condray was assigned to Headquarters, United States Air Force as a Plans and Programs officer.

Acknowledgments

No research effort is ever completed by one person alone. Many different people *provided* key assistance to me as I worked on this paper. Many of the insights and details provided in this paper are due to their efforts; any flaws found in this text are my responsibility alone.

My basic research was greatly assisted by Lt Col Dave Snodgrass and Lt Col Bill Roege, who steered me towards the proper offices and places to conduct interviews on the Quadrennial Defense Review. My thanks also to Dr. David Mets, whose knowledge and personal experience of almost all aspects of airpower history gave me a good start on the New Look era. Dr. Richard Leighton provided excellent insights, including sharing and discussing his draft work on New Look era history. A National Archives employee named Mr. Mahoney went out of his way to help me track down New Look era documents, making a short day's document search very productive indeed. Dr. George Akts (Center for Naval Analysis), Dr. John Schrader (RAND), Dr. Jim Thomason (Institute for Defense Analyses), and Ms. Sharon Fiore (Institute for Defense Analyses) all shared their insights and basic QDR research.

Special thanks go out to the many colleagues (military and civilian) interviewed during my research on the QDR. The frequent stories (and, too often, incidents) of mistrust between the services in these budget conscious days led me to expect suspicion or even obstruction—after all, I was appearing on their doorstep as an unknown Air

Force officer requesting information on how they conducted a strategy review often perceived as an interservice knife fight. To my pleasant surprise, several officials from all of our armed services and the Office of the Secretary of Defense went out of their way to assist me. Although the sensitivity of many of their inputs meant they were interviewed on a not-for-attribution basis, their willingness to allow access to documents and personnel in their offices to accomplish this research speaks well of their professionalism. You know who you are, and I thank you all.

Lieutenant Colonel (select) Roy Houchin and Professor Dennis Drew helped guide me through the daunting task of meshing these inputs into a coherent whole. Readers will appreciate the fact that this paper is several pages shorter due to their guidance and wisdom.

Most of all, I am grateful for my family's support. My wife Linda tolerated the long hours it took to accomplish this paper with the love and patience I have come to expect (though never fully understand). My daughter Lindsey and son Christopher—perhaps amused that I too was "in school"—chose to enjoy when I was with them rather than complain when I had to be away. My love and thanks stay with them always.

Abstract

This study analyzes how the processes used in the national security planning influence the results. It begins by discussing the nature of strategic planning for national security, eventually defining it as a disciplined effort involving the allocation of resources to programmed activities aimed at achieving a set of objectives by integrating major goals, policies, and action sequences into a cohesive whole. Two examples (the New Look of 1953 and the Quadrennial Defense Review of 1997) are selected for comparison due to the many parallels of their respective historical situations. The next step in the study defines several alternative methods for conducting strategic planning, including how using those methods could influence the outcome. These differences are used to analyze both the New Look and the Quadrennial Defense Review. The New Look provides an example of a primarily sequential, top-down process while the Quadrennial Defense Review demonstrated the advantages and drawbacks of a primarily parallel process which had both top-down and bottom-up aspects. The final section discusses the implications of the different approaches, including the recommendation that any review contemplating major changes in national security policy follow a more sequential and top-down process with clear guidance given to participants.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Need for Strategic Planning

Civilian and military leaders have conducted strategic planning since at least as far back as the Romans, when a system of diplomacy, carefully selected military deployments, and road and sea links was established to secure the far-flung territories of the Empire.[1] The results of these plans have long been debated: just what role was the German High Seas Fleet of the early 20th century meant to play in their national strategy? Was the "massive retaliation" strategy of the 1950s a reasonable use of new technology to provide national security at sustainable cost or a dangerous gamble risking world annihilation over minor issues? What will be the right balance of capabilities between peace keeping operations and the lower risk (but higher threat) of major theater warfare in the early 21st Century?

These debates have continued in the 1990s, which could be viewed as a "Golden Age" of strategic defense planning and analysis based on the sheer number of national security studies in the United States alone. A blizzard of programs and research mark the trail—the "Base Force" of 1991, the Bottom-Up Review (BUR) of 1993, the Commission on Roles and Missions (CORM) in 1995, and the Quadrennial Defense Review/ National Defense Panel (QDR/NDP) studies in 1996-7. Thousands of people and tens of

thousands of hours of effort have been devoted to such studies and their supporting analyses (for example, the Deep Attack Weapons Mix Study, or DAWMS).

All of these strategic planning efforts reflect awareness of the challenge involved in coming to grips with the evolving post-war national security environment. Most defense planners involved in these efforts foresee a complicated national security environment which may include (but is not limited to) regional threats and instabilities, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the hazily understood but threatening concept of information warfare, and the unknown impact of rapid technological advances.[2] The results of each study produces new debates, triggering criticisms which frequently become the basis of a follow-on planning effort.

But the process of how these strategic plans are developed receives less attention. Decision making theory tends to address tradeoffs such as the "Prisoners Dilemma" (to cooperate for high risk but better reward—or not cooperate to ensure a personally less optimal but potentially less disastrous outcome) or how to manipulate specific situations (such as making sure the opponent has the "last move" to avoid mutual disaster when conducting brinkmanship).

The vagueness of the term "strategic planning" reflects this relative lack of consensus on the subject. It is not defined in any joint or service publication, nor is there a single widely accepted meaning for it in the civilian academic world. Some variations include:

A discipline or management function involving the allocation of resources to programmed activities calculated to achieve a set of goals in a dynamic, competitive environment.[3]

A *disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that define what an organization (or other entity) is, what it does, and why it does it*.[4]

A pattern or plan that integrates an organization's major goals, policies, and action sequences into a cohesive whole.[5]

There are subtle but significant variations in the above definitions. Is strategic planning a function or a process? Does it define what an organization is, or does it primarily act to integrate an organization? None of the above definitions outlines a time limit for strategic planning. Some analysts state explicitly that "strategic planning is long-range planning."[6] Others separate strategic thinking (providing "perspective") from long-range planning (providing "position") as part of an overall planning continuum with no specific time frame for either.[7]

Fortunately, this confusion can be simplified somewhat for national security planning in general and for the Department of Defense (DOD) in particular. National security policies and overall guidance are provided (at least in theory) from sources such as the President, the Congress, and (occasionally) the judicial branch of our government. The DOD must meet this guidance by integrating its subordinate organizations in some way to meet its assigned objectives. This study will therefore define strategic planning as *a disciplined effort involving the allocation of resources to programmed activities aimed at achieving a set of objectives by integrating major goals, policies, and action sequences into a cohesive whole*. This emphasizes strategic planning as a process which acts to integrate DOD's present and future operating concepts in support of an overall national security strategy.

The time frame for military strategic planning remains vague; however, many factors combine to push it into the long term future. Long weapon system development and deployment times (aircraft carriers and B-52 bombers whose design began in the 1940s and were built in the 1960s will be serving into the 21st century) mean that choices made today will impact decisions and options far into the future. Military organizations are frequently described as conservative in their approach to accepting new ideas and concepts, which implies that a decade or more may be necessary to evolve new missions, tasks, and concepts of operation.[8] These and other reasons led Lieutenant General Perry M. Smith (former head of U.S. Air Force long range planning) to define the most productive period for strategic national security planning as 10-25 years. Shorter time spans are near term enough to minimize anticipated changes in the means and methods of today, while longer time spans become difficult to handle intellectually.[9]

Strategic planning for a military organization such as the Department of Defense thus becomes a question of matching military means to assigned strategic ends. It strives to make military plans congruent with the overall national security strategy, bring coherence between different options and operational concepts, and balance costs/risks against benefits. Military strategic planning often attempts to look 10-25 years into the future in an effort to condition present behavior in anticipation of future challenges and opportunities. Similarly, the strategic planning process can be viewed as how national security planners carry out these tasks.

This study asks how the process of strategic planning influences the results of strategic planning. The ultimate value of the study will be in recommendations to improve future strategic planning processes.

Study Methodology

This study will analyze the strategic planning processes used to conduct the New Look in 1953 and the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) of 1996-97. This will be done by tracing how these two strategic planning studies were carried out—who organized the efforts, how tasks were assigned and sequenced, how inputs from different participants were provided, and how differences of opinion, ideas, and perspectives were resolved. The results themselves will only be addressed with respect to what they may reveal about the processes. Reviewing the magnitude of resource allocation, force structure, operational concepts, or other changes recommended by a study may provide insight on whether a given process is more or less likely to produce major changes.

There remains the potential problem involved in any two case studies from different periods—the danger of comparing "apples and oranges" from dissimilar eras. However, there are some intriguing similarities to the challenges that faced military planners in 1953 and those that challenged planners in 1997. Some of these include:

Unfamiliar strategic environment. The early Cold War era presented the United States with a new problem—how to secure itself against a peacetime threat which could threaten United States allies with large ground forces and (theoretically, at least) strike immediate and devastating blows directly against the U.S. itself. By 1997 the context was quite different but equally unfamiliar: what were the best ways to ensure national security in an era where no peer existed but where a bewildering array of medium to small challenges raised new threats?

Unknown impact of new technologies. By 1953, atomic weapons were becoming more numerous and hydrogen weapons were about to be tested for the first time.

Bombers, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles opened up the possibility of intercontinental combat—and raised questions about what their presence meant in a world where colonial conflicts and the Korean War raged on. Similarly, there was little consensus in 1997 on how "information warfare," precision weapons, space systems, and proliferation of all kinds of technology (including weapons of mass destruction) will impact future conflicts.

Perception of constrained resources. There were major concerns in the United States about whether high military spending could be sustained indefinitely without seriously damaging the national economy. Never before had the United States maintained a large standing military over the "long haul."[10] Though it would be several years before Khruschev would say "We will bury you," there were already fears that capitalism would spend its way to ruin in its confrontation with communism. In 1997 the economic problem was no less daunting—the military's status as the largest element of "discretionary" government spending and the looming specter of increased social spending implied a decreasing portion of the gross domestic product available for military spending.

Concern over basic strategy. The Korean War brought home the potential costs of a containment strategy against communism—was there a better way? In the post-Cold War world, the question was which threats did we need to prepare for—ballistic missiles, conventional wars, suitcase nuclear weapons, insurgencies, electronic attacks via cyberspace, or some other contingency?

Concern over how force structure matched strategy. In 1953, force structure planners asked questions like how large did the Army need to be to keep the Soviet

hordes out of Europe, how much strategic nuclear-armed airpower would it take to strike a mortal blow, and could our air defenses parry a Soviet strike against our homeland. Today planners ask what kind of force structure would it take to fight and win two nearly simultaneous MRCs in a world of proliferating WMD and perceptions of extreme U.S. sensitivity to casualties? The right balances between land, sea, and airpower have long been a part of the U.S. defense debates.

Of course, there are also significant differences in the planning environments of 1953 and 1997. The most important differences for this study are those which may have significantly affected how the New Look and QDR were accomplished. Some of the more obvious differences include:

Level of perceived threat. The Soviet Union represented a direct threat as a near-peer competitor to the United States in 1953. Lack of information about their capabilities and the perception of a global communist block intent on world domination only heightened this threat. Nothing like this existed in 1997; however, the proliferation of WMD could increase the number of threats who could hurt us badly—and Russia still had the ability to destroy the U.S., no matter how their intentions are perceived. This meant that both the New Look and the QDR faced unfamiliar situations which strategic planners struggled to master.

Different government/military structure. The federal government is much larger in 1997 than in 1953, including an enlarged office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and Joint Staff (JS). Furthermore, the CJCS position has become much stronger relative to the individual services in the aftermath of the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols act. However, ADM Radford (CJCS, 1953) took advantage of his relationship with President

Eisenhower and Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson to take a strong leadership role in formulating the New Look. And the Commandant of the Marine Corps participation in most of the New Look decisions meant that the number of players in "the tank" was the same in both eras.

Different political context. New Look was a sweeping change ushered in after the White House and the Congressional leadership changed—and the transition involved a change in political party leadership as well. Furthermore, the same party controlled both the executive and legislative branches. The QDR was done in a second presidential administration and involved much of the same team that did the previous major strategic studies (the BUR and CORM). Republican control of Congress was also a factor—as will be discussed later, the QDR was originated by legislative rather than executive tasking.

Different leadership. President Eisenhower was a recently retired 5-star General of the Army, with extensive experience commanding multinational military forces in both war and peace. He was, however, new to politics. President Clinton has extensive experience in the give and take of politics.

This study will use a short overview discussing different ways of categorizing strategic planning methodologies (top-down, bottom-up, etc.) to set the stage for comparing and contrasting the processes used in the New Look and QDR. Chapters three and four will provide detailed discussion of the New Look and QDR in turn, including their historical context, how they were planned, how they were executed, and a brief discussion of their results. It will then provide lessons learned by comparing the two

studies in chapter five, including implications and recommendations for future defense reviews.

Notes

[1] Luttwak, Edward N., *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire From the First Century A.D. to the Third*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD, 1976

[2] CORM report, page ES-2

[3] Gray, Daniel H., "Uses and Misuses of Strategic Planning", *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 64, No. 1, 1986, pp. 89

[4] Bryson, John M., and William D. Roering, "Initiation of Strategic Planning by Governments", *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 48, No.6, 1988, pp. 995

[5] Mintzberg, Henry and James Brian Quinn, *The Strategy Process: Concepts, Contexts, and Cases*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1991, pp. 5

[6] Englebrecht, Joseph A., Jr., Robert L. Bivins, Patrick M. Condray, Merrily D. Fecteau, John P. Geis II, and Kevin C. Smith, *Alternate Futures for 2025: Security Planning to Avoid Surprise*, Air University Press, Maxwell AFB, AL, 1996, pp. 132

[7] Morrissey, George L., *A Guide to Long-Range Planning: Creating Your Strategic Journey*, Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, CA, 1996, pp. 2-4

[8] Rosen, Stephen Peter, *Winning the Next War: Innovation and the Modern Military*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 1991

[9] Smith, Perry M., Jerrold P. Allen, John H. Steward II, and F. Douglas Whitehouse, *Creating Strategic Vision: Long-Range Planning for National Security*, National Defense University Press, Washington, D.C., 1987, pp. 3-4

[10] President Eisenhower often spoke of the need to establish a U.S. military structure which could be sustained for the indefinite future—the "long haul" needed to eventually outlast communism. See Eisenhower, Dwight D., *The White House Years: Mandate for Change 1953-1956*.

Chapter 2

National Security Planning Processes

Basic Strategic Planning Process

The basic strategic planning process is fairly simple. One reviews the interests of the organization being planned for, examines them in light of the context or environment they will operate in, and generates a strategy to achieve the interests within that context.[1] More recent articles have kept this same basic structure while expanding it to six steps: 1) defining the mission, goals, and key values of an organization; 2) situation analysis (external and internal); 3) establish assumptions; 4) set objectives and priorities; 5) develop strategies and/or action plans; and 6) design a system to ensure follow up.[2]

However, this apparently simple basic structure conceals a myriad of different options for approaching strategic planning in general and national security planning in specific. How planners choose among these options will establish how a strategic planning process is intended to play out. Comparing the intended structure of a planning process, how it was actually executed, and its results may provide insights on how a particular planning process could have influenced its outcome.

Complicating Factors In National Security Planning

Unfortunately for national security planners, there are several factors which render this apparently simple process into a very complex reality:

Interaction with other actors. Military planners deal with an environment where other intelligent and purposeful actors (countries or non-state groups) will be actively trying to achieve their own ends—which may support or conflict with the objectives of the United States. Planners must therefore attempt to understand what strategies the other actors are likely to pursue and how those strategies are likely to interact with both the operating environment and alternative U.S. strategies.[3]

Long range forecasting. A strategic plan aimed for the future will be operating in an environment which becomes less and less predictable the longer one attempts to forecast. The large number of actors and the intricate ways technological, cultural, and other factors interact make prediction of future operating environments very difficult. Planners have to develop a strategy flexible enough to achieve their interests despite knowing that the actual future context will be (to a larger or smaller extent) different from any specific forecast they make. Attempting to reach out 10 to 25 years (as suggested by Lieutenant General Perry Smith) makes this task difficult indeed.

Interagency and interpersonal dynamics. Policy decisions in an organization as complex and diverse as the DOD inevitably involve policy conflicts which stem from the diverse interests and approaches of constituent organizations. These disagreements are "an integral part of the policy-making process."[4] Such conflicts can stretch down to a personal level as important individuals make decisions based on their own perceived interests. Put another way, strategic planning is both a logical and a social process.[5]

Just to make things more challenging for military strategic planners, these factors can interact. For example, a strategic plan which is broad enough to be flexible over the long term may be vague enough to allow misinterpretation (willful or otherwise) by different agencies or individuals. Dilemmas such as this make strategic planning for the defense community "perhaps the most complicated task the government performs."[6]

Strategic planning experts Ascher and Overholt suggest a modification of the basic strategic planning process to overcome some of the challenges facing military strategic planners. The solution they propose is lengthening the amount of time taken in the process in order to design a comprehensive (but abstract) national strategy, derive military strategy consistent with political and economic elements, and only then decide force structure and resource allocation issues within context of military strategy.[7]

Different Methods for Organizing Strategic Planning

The DOD usually receives its objectives from outside the organization. These can come from the President (as head of the government's executive branch) or from Congress (who hold the legislative "purse strings" funding the DOD). However, DOD is capable of conducting a strategic review and/or setting its own objectives for a strategic review as long as the President or Congress do not forbid it.

Once you have your objectives (set from inside or outside the organization), the question becomes one of how to go about attaining them. There are many different techniques available for strategic planning.[8] However, many of these represent variations of different strategic planning tools rather than larger scale organizational options. Steiner lays out four basic options for the planning process: top-down, bottom-up, team,

and combined planning.[9] Each one of these options carries its own strengths and weaknesses.

A *top-down* approach to strategic planning is one where the planning is done by the top level of the organizational heirarchy. Any subordinate planning is made under detailed guidelines, tend to be primarily aimed at implementing top level guidance, and are reviewed by the top to ensure consistency. Top management provides the vision, objectives, and strategies to realize their dreams in an essentially centralized process.[10]

This concentration of planning has many strengths—but there are also important weaknesses to be considered. Top-level backing for the strategic plan is built into this method, and limiting the number of participants in the planning tends to provide a better chance to produce a focussed vision of priorities and concepts. However, corporate experience warns that strategic planning isolated in the headquarters will fail.[11] One problem is a lack of countervailing views to test ideas and concepts. A plan designed at the very top of an organization may seem brilliant, but if it ignores "tactical-level" realities it will not work. Another problem with a proud history in the DOD is having more or less permanent government employees "hunker down" and wait out disliked plans from relatively short-term generals and political appointees.

The reverse of a top-down methodology is (logically enough) a *bottom-up* planning process. A bottom-up planning process would be one which primarily aggregates inputs from subordinates without significant changes or overall structure. Few guidelines are given, and any provided are very broad in nature. Planning produces may be reviewed at top management level for approval but wide latitude is given to subordinates as long as

the plan meets minimum standards of practicality. The planning process is essentially distributed.[12]

Bottom-up planning provides subordinates maximum room for their own initiatives and exploits their "tactical-level" knowledge. Helping create a strategic plan may also give employees a sense of ownership which helps them "buy into" it. However, this approach may end up with inconsistent plans from different subordinates. For example, an Air Force assumption that in the future the Army will provide rear area security may not mesh with Army decisions, or an Army assumption that the Air Force will provide close air support as their primary mission may conflict with Air Forces employment concepts. Furthermore, subordinates used to doing business in a given manner may be less likely to create strategic plans fundamentally shifting their operations without some guidance from above.

A third variation in Steiner's taxonomy is *team planning*. This method involves having a leader meet with subordinate managers who form a planning team. The military parallel would be a general officer using subordinates as the members of his or her planning team. Plans produced are then relayed to the rest of the organization for any additional actions necessary. In theory, this variation of top-down planning allows the leader to provide focus while supplementing creativity with inputs from subordinates. However, it is highly dependent on the interpersonal relationship between the leader and the members of the team—an authoritarian leader who imposes their will on the rest makes team planning a cover for top-down planning.

The variation between these different methodologies is often one of degree rather than an absolute. A large, multi-tiered organization such as the DOD will rarely

approach the ideal for either top-down, bottom-up, or team planning. Power and influence are too widely distributed for one individual or small group to dominate completely; on the other hand, some form of oversight is necessary to keep the whole apparatus moving in more or less the same direction. For example, general guidelines could be given to different subordinates, who then provide specific guidelines to their own subordinates in a more top-down manner. Steiner refers to this as using a *combined approach*.

However, the practical necessity for an organization such as DOD to use some form of combined approach does not render all DOD planning processes identical. One may still describe a given planning process used within DOD by examining whether it carried more characteristics of a given approach (such as top-down vs. bottom-up). This study will examine the nature of the original tasking received by DOD in the New Look and the QDR as well as how the department issued guidance to the services to evaluate which overall methodology was used in each study.

Framing the Questions for Study.

Another issue to be addressed in any military strategic planning study is setting up the guidance issued to subordinates. Such guidance provides a framework for the study by outlining what are the primary problems to be solved, questions to be answered, and assumptions (if any) to be made.

This framework is an important influence on the outcome of a strategic planning process. Questions not raised by higher authority are less likely to receive attention. This is especially true the more top-down a planning process is because of the increased oversight and more precise guidance provided to subordinates. Guidance can include

almost anything the tasking agency (President, Congress, Secretary of Defense, or other) deems important. Some of the different bases for guidance[13] include:

*Strategy-based***.** Guidance for a strategy-based planning process would emphasize the development of strategies as a first step in the planning process. Constraints (such as personnel or financial resources, available capabilities, political acceptability) are then used to evaluate which strategy or mix of strategies best meets the organization's overall objectives.

Resource-based. Resource-based guidance emphasizes the constraints imposed on the planning organization without fixing a given strategy or capability. The flexibility given to subordinate planners on strategy remains confined due to the resource constraints; for example, subordinates can be informed that any plan which breaks a constraint such as the possibility of higher cost or casualties will be rejected.

Capabilities-based. This type of guidance emphasizes the missions or tasks envisioned for the future, including the capabilities necessary to accomplish these missions. Different ways of achieving these capabilities will be evaluated based other constraints (resource, political, etc.) but capabilities remain the central questions to be answered. It is different from the shorter term "requirements based" methodology because it emphasizes what capabilities are needed without emphasizing specific threats or employment concepts.[14]

Note that any of these forms of guidance are compatible with the different planning methodologies (top-down, bottom-up, team, or combined). For example, strategy guidance can be phrased in broad or very specific terms. Resource constraints can be similarly tailored to either provide loose guidelines or hard "caps."

How guidance is phrased is also important to how subordinates perceive a planning process. Guidance which emphasizes resource constraints may be perceived as a "budget drill" rather than a planning process, which significantly changes how participants will interact. Strategy or capability based planning which emphasizes a particular element of an organization (such as emphasizing land or air power) will immediately create "constituencies" for and against the study.

Evaluation Tools.

One strategic planning area which has seen considerable change over the last few decades is in the tools available for evaluating strategic options. This proliferation has led to a new set of choices for strategic planners. Different evaluation tools carry their own strengths and weaknesses which may influence the way a strategic planning process plays out. Some of the different options include:[15]

Intuition. Intuition in its purest sense involves having a decision maker learn what they can about a problem and allow their subconscious to arrive at a solution. Obviously, it is not systemic or easily reproduceable (in the sense of understanding why a particular decision was made). However, it is still a common way of dealing with problems, and should not be underestimated.[16] Unfortunately, few organizations can plan on being led by intuitive geniuses.

Expert opinion. This is a step up from pure intuition in the sense that an expert will (presumably) be able to use their experience to improve their judgement. The expert may be able to provide a traceable rationale for their opinion. The challenge is finding an expert whose opinion is unbiased and accepted by all concerned in the process—a particular problem for complex multi-disciplinary fields such as national security.

Committee. Grouping several experts together into a committee provides a venue for additional judgement and feedback to be applied to a problem. The tradeoff is that the bargaining process needed to form a group consensus may filter out some of the more original "out of the box" ideas and make it harder to trace the rationale for a given decision.

Systems analysis. Systems analysis began making an impact around 50 years ago, and has grown steadily since then. It involves establishing a process from formulating a problem to verifying the conclusions by experiment. While ultimately reliant on subjective judgement, systems analysis makes the reasoning process more analytical, quantifiable, and (ideally) more traceable by others.

Simulation. Simulations have long been used to "game out" different strategic or military issues,[17] and can be used as an evaluative tool by themselves or as part of a larger systems analysis. Simulations allow one to explore possible actions and reactions by different actors in a given context, providing the ability to repeat the experiences and learn from mistakes made in the process. However, they can be misapplied. Simulations are subject to the famous "law of the instrument:" "if the only tool you have is a hammer, everything tends to look like a nail."[18] Applying a complicated computer simulation model without being aware of its assumptions and algorithms merely allows one to "be wrong faster with more convincing graphics."[19]

Interpreting How the Process Influences Results

The above discussion outlines some possible ways that decisions made in designing and executing a planning process may influence results. The challenge occurs when trying to analyze how such influences played out within the context of a given strategic

planning effort—or how they may impact a future project. This study will use the following questions as ways to explore the planning processes in the New Look and QDR:

Process design and execution. Was the fundamental design of each planning process based on a more top-down, bottom-up, or other framework? Did this design continue through during execution? Were the expected strengths and weaknesses of the planning methodology reflected in the execution and results of the study?

Guidance. Were the instructions or criteria provided by the study more indicative of a strategy, resources, or other framework? How did this framework influence the strategic planners carrying out the New Look/QDR?

Evaluation tools. What kinds of analytical tools were used in the study to make decisions and/or resolve disputes? How were the strengths and weaknesses of these tools reflected in the study's results?

Results. What changes were proposed by the study? Were they consistent with each other? Did they reflect an overall concept or strategy? Were the strategic planners aware of the limitations of their methodologies, and (if so) how was this awareness reflected in the results of the study?

These questions provide the framework for analyzing the planning processes of the New Look (chapter III) and the QDR (chapter IV). Results of this analysis will be discussed in chapter V, including implications for future studies.

Notes

[1] Ascher, William and William H. Overholt, *Strategic Planning and Forecasting: Political Risk and Economic Opportunity*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1983, pp. 21-41. Dr. Ascher and Dr. Overholt have over 20 years of experience as strategic planning consultants for, among others, the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and the National Security Council.

Notes

[2] Webster, James L., William E. Reif, and Jeffrey S. Bracker, "The Manager's Guide to Strategic Planning Tools and Techniques," *Planning Review*, November/December 1989, pp. 5

[3] This interaction is so important that some researchers have defined "strategic thinking" as "the art of outdoing an adversary, knowing that the adversary is trying to do the same to you." Dixit, Avinash K. and Barry J. Nalebuff, *Thinking Strategically: The Competitive Edge in Business, Politics, and Everyday Life*, W. W. Norton and Company, NY, 1991, pp. ix.

[4] Schilling, Warner R., Paul Y. Hammond, and Glenn H. Snyder, *Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets*, Columbia University Press, NY, 1962, pp. 22

[5] Ascher, William and William H. Overholt, *Strategic Planning and Forecasting: Political Risk and Economic Opportunity*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1983, pp. 42-55

[6] Smith, Perry M., Jerrold P. Allen, John H. Stewart II, and F. Douglas Whitehouse, *Creating Strategic Vision: Long-Range Planning for National Security*, National Defense University Press, Washington, D.C., 1987, pp. 82

[7] Ascher and Overholt, pp. 38

[8] For example, there is a comparison of 30 different planning tools in Webster, James L., William E. Reif, and Jeffrey S. Bracker, "The Manager's Guide to Strategic Planning Tools and Techniques," *Planning Review*, November/December 1989, pp. 4-13

[9] Steiner, George A., *Strategic Planning: What Every Manager Must Know*, The Free Press, New York, 1979, pp 60-69. Mr. Steiner has extensive experience in developing and implementing strategic planning processes for private and public organizations.

[10] Engelbrecht, Joseph A., Jr., Robert L. Bivins, Patrick M. Condray, Merrily D. Fecteau, John P. Geis II, and Kevin C. Smith, *Alternate Futures for 2025: Strategic Planning to Avoid Surprise*, Air University Press, Maxwell AFB, AL, 1996, pp. 134-137

[11] "The New Breed of Strategic Planner," *Business Week*, September 17, 1984, pp. 62-68

[12] Engelbrecht et al, pp. 137-140

[13] The distinction between these terms—such as strategy, resource, or capabilities based—may seem small due to the interaction between resource constraints, capabilities, and strategy. I have included them due to the amount of argument over whether the New Look and QDR were primarily based on resource constraints versus an overarching strategy. For example, the QDR report refers to itself as a blueprint for a "strategy-based" program (Cohen, William S., *Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review*, U.S. Government Printing, Washington, DC, 1997, pp. 1).

[14] Davis, Paul K., "Planning Under Uncertainty, Then and Now: Paradigms Lost and Paradigms Emerging,", *New Challenges in Defense Planning*, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 1996, pp. 26

[15] Most of the following discussion uses the definitions provided by Quade, E.S. in "Principles and Procedures of Systems Analysis," from *Systems Analysis and Policy Planning*, pp. 30-53

[16] Steiner, pp. 9

[17] Ascher and Overholt, pp. 9

Notes

[18] Khalilzad, Zalmay and David Ochmanek, "Rethinking US Defence Planning," *Survival*, vol. 39, no. 1, Spring 1997, pp. 43-64

[19] Anonymous quote. I first heard something like it as a graduate meteorology student in 1986 referring to weather models. The opacity of many of today's conflict models make this even more appropriate for national security questions. See Khalilzad and Ochmanek for more discussion of this problem.

Chapter 3

The New Look of 1952—1953

Historical Context

As President Eisenhower took his oath of office on 20 January 1953, the world situation was not encouraging.[1] The Korean War dragged on, and another conflict in French Indochina threatened to pull in the United States. Europe was still recovering from World War II and seemed unable to agree on how to defend itself. Stalin remained in control of an atomic-capable Soviet Union that had swallowed eastern Europe, triggered the crisis which led to the Berlin airlift, and maintained far larger land forces than the United States. The apparent threat of monolithic communism loomed as an aggressive force that had to be contained no matter what the cost.[2]

However, the cost of countering Soviet aggression seemed to be unacceptable as well. Budget deficits stemming from World War II debts and Korean War spending were blamed for an eroding economy. The consumer price index had risen almost 50% from 1945 to 1952 despite Office of Price Stabilization and Wage Stabilization Board administered wage and price controls. Many believed the high expenditures and crippling debt foreshadowed "creeping socialism" in a permanently controlled economy.[3]

Technological change created new possibilities and problems. The United States had recently increased the potential level of atomic devastation by developing the H-bomb,

with a Soviet one anticipated soon. Jet bombers, long range cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles raised the prospect of intercontinental war—which meant that the U.S. homeland itself faced the specter of a devastating strike just 11 years after Pearl Harbor demonstrated that such surprise attacks were not unthinkable. Eisenhower himself would later comment that technological change had progressed to the point that "tried and true" had been replaced by a new slogan: "if it works, it's obsolete."[4]

These stresses and strains contributed to political divisions at home. Despite an impressive presidential election victory, the Republican Party had only a razor thin edge in Congress. A shift of six votes in the House of Representatives or 1 vote in the Senate would be enough to erase their majority and defeat administration proposals for change. Charges of treason and sedition were in the air, led by Senator Joseph McCarthy. The Eisenhower administration itself was viewed with suspicion by some Republicans due to its lack of deep roots—the President had only openly declared his political affiliation within the last two years, and he had fought a sometimes bitter primary fight against "Mr. Republican" (Senator Taft) for the 1952 presidential nomination.[5]

Continuation of the Truman administration's policies seemed unacceptable to a new administration dedicated to balancing the budget. The outgoing administration had just finished drawing up National Security Council (NSC) resolution 141 (NSC 141) detailing the many threats facing the United States and concluding with calls for more defense funding rather than less. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) concurred with this reasoning. Their "best military judgement" was that existing programs were inadequate to meet the threat of Soviet military power projected for 1954-55.[6] The result was an FY54 budget

submission of $45 billion for defense in a total federal budget of $78.6 billion—including $9.9 billion in deficit spending.[7]

President Eisenhower had campaigned on a platform of national security and solvency, emphasizing planning for the future rather than reacting to "yesterday's headlines."[8] Such planning would allow the U.S. to remain secure over the "long haul" of an indefinite cold war without severe economic strain.[9] His State of the Union address reiterated the need for a single national military policy encompassing economic as well as military objectives and proper coordination of the different services.[10]

However, Eisenhower had not laid out a clear path on how he planned to get that single national military policy except the proposal to appoint a civilian committee to study DOD and design an overall national security plan.[11] Indeed, there is no record of any other particular planning process designed in advance except (perhaps) within President Eisenhower's mind. The New Look evolved over time as a series of events, including the FY54 budget process, Project Solarium, The *Sequoia* cruise, drafting NSC 162/2, the Everest Committee, and the FY55 budget process. Some of these events overlapped or were accomplished in parallel, but most of the process was tackled sequentially (see figure 1). The duration of the New Look's view of the future also remained vague; the words "long haul" and "indefinite" were not specified beyond Admiral Radford's 13 Jan 1954 comment as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) that the period of tension could last "10 to 20 years or more."[12]

Setting the Stage: Nov 52-Apr 53

Preliminary discussions on how to change the nation's national military strategy began after President-elect Eisenhower's trip to Korea in Nov-Dec 1952. Eisenhower's entourage departed Korea aboard the

U.S.S. *Helena*, stopping at Guam to pick up a party of advisors flown in from the United States. These advisors included John Foster Dulles and George M. Humphrey (nominees for Secretary of State and Treasury, respectively) as well as Mr. Joseph M. Dodge, the future Director of the Budget. Also aboard was Admiral Radford, the Commander in Chief of U.S. forces in the Pacific (later CJCS). The *Helena* voyage gave them an opportunity to discuss U.S. national security strategy for the future. No final decisions were reached, but the discussions reinforced the President's emphasis on the need for both security and solvency to maintain a strong defense posture for "the long haul."[13]

One reflection of the increased attention to the economy as a significant factor in the overall national security picture was the addition of the Secretary of the Treasury (Mr. Humphrey) and the Director of Budget (Mr. Dodge) as members of the National Security Council soon after President Eisenhower's inauguration. This gave them a direct input on how they believed other elements of national security would impact the nation's economy and vice versa.[14]

The initial task facing the new administration was how to reconcile the FY 54 budget (to go into effect 1 Jul 1953) with President Eisenhower's campaign promises. On 3 Feb 1953, Mr. Dodge asked all government agencies to critically examine their programs in light of the need to cut expenditures.[15] Defense made up over half the budget, and was

not exempt from this effort. On 7 Feb, Deputy Secretary of Defense Roger M. Kyes directed service secretaries to review the military budget for "intelligent savings."

A tug of war ensued between the services and the budget agencies, with new Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson caught in the middle. The JCS reaffirmed their comments (from NSC 141) that the military was already overstretched.[16] The NSC then recommended (at Mr. Dodge's request) that the DOD study the impacts of reducing FY 54 and 55 defense spending by $4.3 billion and $9.4 billion, respectively. The chiefs replied that such cuts would "dangerously affect national security.[17] They followed up by warning that any cuts in force goals to achieve a balance budget in FY 54 and FY 55 increased risk, especially cuts in the Air Force program.[18]

The NSC compromised by acknowledging that the announced goal of a balanced budget could only be achieved gradually. President Eisenhower also announced that in the future military forces would be designed as sustainable over a long period of time rather than set to a specific date of maximum future threat,[19] a policy codified on 29 April 1953 as NSC 149/2.[20] This allowed the DOD to use its own budget experts to review military spending for any funding in the FY 54 proposal which could be deferred until FY 55 (giving time for a new national strategy to form). As it turned out, most of the deferred spending fell in the Air Force's budget, which was trimmed by $5 billion for FY 54. This proposed budget for FY 54 was submitted to Congress in May 1953 and passed (despite the strong protests of the Air Force Chief of Staff General Hoyt S. Vandenberg) on 29 Jul 1953.[21]

By the end of April 1953, several changes had taken place to set the stage for the New Look. Although national security remained a priority over a balanced budget,[22]

economic representatives had been added to the NSC and economic factors were made a specific part of our interim national security policy (NSC 149/2). Adopting a "long haul" versus a "crisis year" planning policy shifted the balance of power in budget reviews from the military services to the Bureau of Budget.[23] President Eisenhower increased the centralization of authority by proposing Reorganization Plan No. 6, enlarging the power of the CJCS by giving him the power to manage the Joint Staff (JS)—previous chairmen had to accept whomever the services offered as Joint Staff members. This plan also increased the power of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) over the individual services. It went into effect on 30 June 1953.[24]

Crafting Strategic Alternatives: The Solarium Project May-Jul 53

Candidate Eisenhower had announced one part of his plan to reform national security strategy: to appoint a civilian group to thoroughly examine U.S. national security strategy. President Eisenhower began this process in an 8 May 1953 meeting in the White House sun room (or "solarium") with four of his close advisors: Under Secretary of State Walter Bedell Smith, Special Assistant Robert Cutler, CIA Director Allen Dulles, and C.D. Jackson, Chairman of the Psychological Strategy Board. President Eisenhower directed that a separate task force be drawn up for each of three alternative national security strategies prepared by Mr. Cutler. The overall project (given the code name of "Operation Solarium" after its place of origin) was placed under the direction of Lieutenant General H.A. Craig, USAF, the Commandant of the National War College. NSC oversight was provided by a committee consisting of Walter Smith, Robert Cutler, and Allen Dulles. [25]

A steering committee was established under Lieutenant General James H. Doolittle, USAF (ret), a close friend of the President, to write a charter for each task force.[26] The task forces were composed of military and civilian personnel under the leadership of an advocate for each proposed national security strategy. Task Force A (containment) was led by Mr. George Kennan (the original architect of containment). Task Force B (drawing the line—deterrence) advocated warning the USSR that any military actions into non-communist areas might precipitate a general war. Major General James McCormack, Jr., USAF, was chosen to lead task force B. The most aggressive strategy studied in Operation Solarium was Task Force C's liberation strategy, led by Admiral Richard L. Conolly of the Naval War College. Each of these task forces was to provide clear policy choices by making the best case they could for their alternatives.[27] A fourth option (giving the USSR a two year warning to negotiate, followed by war while we still had the advantage) was not considered because is seemed too much like preventive war.[28] Figure 2 shows the approximate structure of Operation Solarium.

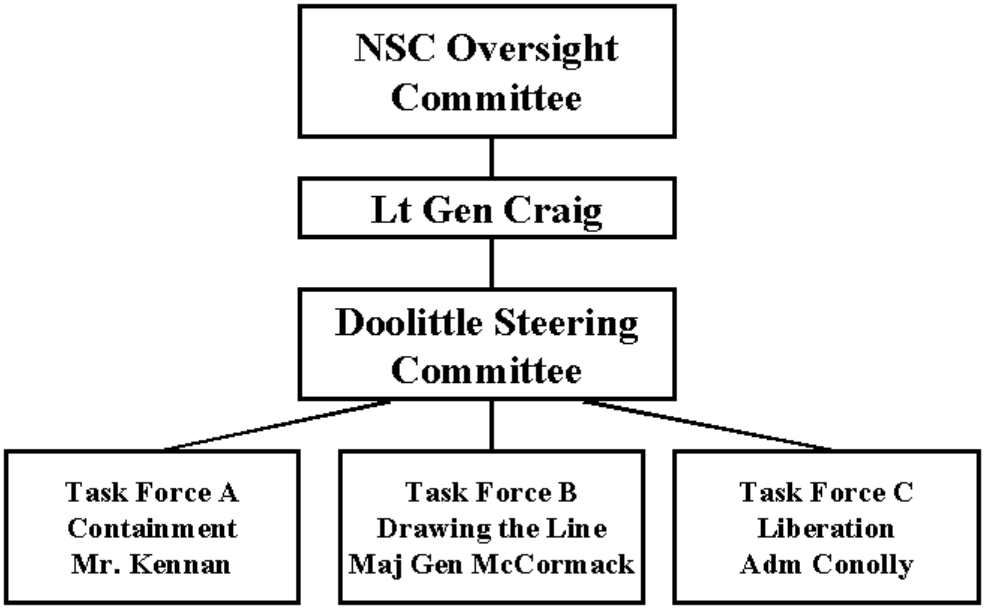


Figure 1. Solarium Project Structure

Project Solarium got underway on 10 June 1953 and went on for six weeks. Task Force members used their own expertise, the resources of the National War College, and inputs from other departments to support their analyses.[29]

The results were briefed to the NSC on 16 July 1953. Summaries of the three presentations were sent to the JCS and the individual services for comments.[30] The JCS proposed that the NSC Planning Board prepare a study providing the rationale behind past rejections of each proposal, a study that would have taken weeks.[31] However, the NSC rejected this idea as too time consuming and tasked the NSC Planning Board to draw up a new policy statement incorporating elements of all three task force reports but retaining the basic framework of containment[32] "with a more precise definition of areas where any Soviet encroachment would call for a strong military response."[33] Preparation

of the first draft kept the Planning Board busy through September 1953, by which time the new Joint Chiefs of Staff had made their own recommendations.

Developing Military Strategy: The New Joint Chiefs and the *Sequoia* Cruise Jul-Aug 53

The Joint Chiefs of Staff inherited by President Eisenhower had frequently found themselves caught in a partisan crossfire over U.S. foreign policy and military strategy issues. Many Republicans (particularly Senator Robert A. Taft, who had run against Eisenhower for the presidential nomination) felt that the JCS in general and Chairman of the JCS (CJCS) General Omar N. Bradley in particular would be obstacles to proposed budget cuts because they were too closely identified with the previous administration.[34] In addition, all of the Chiefs of Staff except for the Commandant of the Marine Corps were due for renomination in the summer of 1953. The Republican congressional leadership hoped that new Chiefs of Staff would come up with an entirely new grand concept of defense strategy by the 1 August 1953.[35]

President Eisenhower agreed to this proposal, and announced the new nominees on 12 May 1953. Admiral Arthur W. Radford, the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet (who had participated in discussions on the cruiser *Helena* in December 1952) was to be the new CJCS. Admiral Robert B. Carney was nominated to be the new Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and General Matthew B. Ridgway was nominated as the new Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA). General Nathan F. Twining had already been nominated as the new Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF) a week before. Secretary Wilson had made these selections.[36]

The charter for the new chiefs was laid out in a memorandum from President Eisenhower to Secretary of Defense Wilson.[37] Eisenhower personally briefed the new chiefs in the middle of July 1953. Their task was to consider all aspects of military and relate the whole to both foreign and fiscal policy. President Eisenhower also let the chiefs know that he wanted no "split papers," only unanimous decisions.[38]

The new chiefs got to work on 13 July. The original tasking was that the chiefs work alone, without any staff assistance except an aide who supplied office materials—and coffee.[39] They spent their time meeting, studying, and conducting personal travel to carry out their assignment.[40] However, Admiral Radford concluded that his fellow chiefs were having their service staffs carry out studies to augment their personal travel and discussions. After some frustration, he borrowed the Secretary of Navy's yacht *Sequoia* and departed Washington, DC on 6 August 1953 "provisioned for an extensive stay in the lower Potomac" with Admiral Carney, General Ridgway, and General Twining.[41] The announced objective was to keep the new chiefs at sea until agreement was reached.

After some long and hard discussions, the chiefs reached agreement on the outlines of a strategy by the evening of 8 August. It was unanimously approved, but was considered the initial views of the participants rather than a corporate JCS position. The new chiefs concluded that the "most critical factors in the military aspects of our security are air defense of our Continental U.S. and our ability to retaliate swiftly and powerfully in the event we are attacked."[42] U.S. forces were overextended and should be redeployed back to the States as a strategic reserve. Local ground defense would be primarily an indigenous responsibility, backed up by U.S. air and sea power. Near term budget expenditures would not go down due to the need for redeployments, but the long-term

affects would be sustainable over the "long pull."[43] There was one interesting missing piece: there was no mention of using new technology (nuclear weapons) to trade firepower for force structure despite calls by Secretary Humphrey and CSAF Twining. The chiefs may have left this to the NSC due to an inability to reach a unanimous consensus,[44] leaving only a recommendation that the U.S. formulate a "clear, positive policy with respect to the use of atomic weapons, and should announce it publicly.[45]

Admiral Radford presented the chief's new concept to Secretary Wilson and President Eisenhower late on 8 August 1953 and followed up with a 27 August 1953 presentation to the NSC (attended by the other service chiefs as well). It was emphasized that the strategy was based on the military danger of over-extension rather than just budgetary considerations. The only solution the chiefs could envision to reverse what they saw as a deteriorating situation without weakening the economy was to "reverse our present strategy" by redeploying and reorienting U.S. forces.[46] The NSC tentatively approved the concept, subject to a foreign policy analysis by the Department of State on whether it would disrupt U.S. foreign relations. This was provided on 9 Sep 1953 and no insoluble problems were identified.[47] However, the NSC took no further actions pending completion of the national security policy revision ongoing from Project Solarium.

While the chiefs were deliberating, the Korean War armistice was signed on 27 July 1953 and the Soviet Union exploded its own thermonuclear device on 12 August 1953.[48] The NSC Planning Board now had the task of figuring out whether these events significantly impacted the long term U.S. strategy being drawn up after Project Solarium and (now) the new JCS concept paper.

Putting It Together: Developing NSC 162/2 Sep-Oct 53

The NSC had followed Project Solarium by tasking the Planning Board to put the initiatives raised by all three task forces into a single national security document. The Planning Board formed a special committee (which included the JCS Adviser to the NSC, General Gerhart) to draft the document. The committee produced a draft document on 17 September 1953 that reflected both the Solarium Project and the new JCS concept.[49]

However, the Planning Board divided over several issues in NSC 162 and finally forwarded a split draft to the NSC. The NSC was similarly divided. Almost all members agreed with the JCS idea of redeploying forces back to the United States, but some felt withdrawal should begin immediately while others wanted additional studies of foreign reactions. General Gerhart led several members who wanted to press the Soviet Union harder. The JCS criticized the draft for placing a balanced budget above an adequate defense, and debated the exact wording on whether the military posture should emphasize airpower alone or a broader interpretation of national striking power. The NSC went through several drafts of NSC 162, producing NSC 162/1 on 19 October 1953. NSC 162/1 rejected the position of the Treasury Department and Bureau of Budget that economic considerations predominated over military threats; however, it also failed to advocate the most aggressive measures against the communist world advocated by the JCS and continued to emphasize the retaliatory capabilities of "offensive striking power."[50] At Admiral Carney's request, the JCS recommended stressing the military requirement for "massive retaliatory capability" rather than "massive retaliatory damage by offensive striking power."[51]

The NSC finalized discussions of NSC 162/1 in a 29 October 1953 meeting whose importance was underscored by the presence of all of the JCS and the service secretaries. President Eisenhower rejected the JCS suggestion and advocated massive offensive striking power (though he did emphasize the multi-service nature of the term).[52] President Eisenhower accepted the final version as NSC 162/2 on 30 October 1953.

NSC 162/2 defined two basic problems for national security: meeting the Soviet threat and avoiding "serious weakening" of the U.S. economy. Its "strong military posture" emphasized massive retaliation by "offensive striking power," and keeping that strength up over "the long pull." A specific point made was that "in the event of hostilities, the United States will consider nuclear weapons as available for use as other munitions." [53] This essentially ruled out planning for extended conventional conflicts.[54] However, the exact effects of NSC 162/2 and its new statement of national policy on defense budgets and force levels remained to be determined—a question which would, in turn, impact programmed defense funding for FY 55 and beyond.[55]

Translating NSC 162 into Force Structure: The Everest Committee Oct-Dec 53

On 16 October 1953 Secretary Wilson tasked Admiral Radford to have the JCS develop a broad outline for the armed forces size and composition. The tasking requested an outline military strategy to implement the national strategy laid out in NSC 162, force structure sustainable over the "long pull ahead," and an estimate that total active duty military manpower should fall in a range between 2,500,000 and 3,000,000. Fiscal guidance could be procured from "the Secretary of the Treasury and the Director of the Budget." The facilities of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and the service

departments would be available to provide assistance. The report was due not later than 15 December 1953.[56]

The JCS decided to form an ad hoc committee consisting of a chairman and two from the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps. One member from each service "should be a flag or general officer of two star rank." The committee was chaired by the Director of the Joint Staff, Lieutenant General Frank F. Everest, USAF. The JCS drafted its own tasking to the committee on 23 October 1953, including notes that a sound economy was "an essential bulwark" of security and to assume that "atomic weapons will be used by U.S. forces engaged whenever it is of military advantage to do so."[57]

Unfortunately, there is little record of how the Everest committee accomplished its task. The committee did request (and receive) the assistance of economists from the Treasury Department and the Bureau of the Budget,[58] although the only figures cited in the report were attributed to OSD. [59] One may infer the assistance from different service staffs from the difficulty the committee had on reaching consensus on some issues. The JCS themselves left separately on tours of United States overseas installations, returning in mid-November.[60]

The committee's report was submitted to the JCS on 30 Nov 1953. As noted above, the committee had been unable to achieve a full consensus. The strategic concept reflected NSC 162/2, but several paragraphs were "split" between (for example) Air Force/Navy and Army opinions. Similarly, while all agreed on an overall personnel strength of 2,750,000, the three services could not agree on how the manpower and force structure should be divided between the services. The committee eventually put together

recommendations from all three departments on what the entire DOD force structure should look like at the end of FY 1957 and submitted it to the JCS for decision.

Table 1. Everest committee recommendations for end FY 1957 personnel, in thousands

Note. From JCS 2101/111, 30 Nov 53.

Recommendation	Army	Navy	Marines	Air Force
Army	1,060	580	175	950
Navy/Marine Corps	900	693	207	950
Air Force	950	630	170	1,000

Table 2. Everest committee recommendations for end FY 1957 force structure

Note. From JCS 2101/111, 30 Nov 53.

Recommendation	Army Divisions	Navy Ships	Marine Divs/Wgs	Air Force Wings
Army	14	799	2	120
Navy/Marine Corps	12	1093	3	127
Air Force	12	904	3	137

Note that despite the divergence between the services, all of them reflected NSC 162/2 by increasing Air Force force levels while reducing the other services. The committee recommended a total FY 1957 DOD budget of $33.8 billion except for the Army proposal, which was priced at $34.235 billion.[61]

All four chiefs (including General Shepherd, Commandant of the Marine Corps, who spoke as a full member of the JCS by law since the discussions affected his service) upheld their service recommendations. Extensive discussions between the chiefs lasted over a week. Finally, Admiral Radford approached Secretary Wilson and told him the chiefs could reach unanimous agreement if the manpower ceiling was lifted from 2,750,000 to 2,815,000 (50,000 to the Army and 15,000 to the Marine Corps). With Wilson's approval, the chiefs drew up JCS 2101/113 on 9 December 1953 as their

response to the original 16 October tasking. The total DOD budget for FY 1957 (including spending not allocated to the services) was $32.912 billion.[62]

Table 3. JCS recommendations to Secretary Wilson on FY 1957 personnel, force structure, and budget. Personnel figures are in thousands, budget figures are in billions.

Note. From JCS 2101/113, 9 Dec 53.

Final Figures	Army	Navy	Marines	Air Force
Personnel	1,000	650	190	975
Force Structure	14 Divisions	1030 Ships	3 Divisions/ Wings	137 Wings
Budget	$7.387	$8.790	(in Navy $)	$14.100

JCS 2101/113 was unanimous, but that unanimity was based on a series of assumptions built into the document about world conditions in general and the build-up of Korean, German, and Japanese forces in particular.[63] These assumptions were insisted on by Admiral Carney and General Ridgway, who felt that if any of these assumptions should prove invalid than the recommended program would be abandoned.[64]

Admiral Radford outlined the proposed strategy and force levels to the NSC on 16 December 1953. The President and the Council approved of the military program in JCS 2101/113. The same meeting also saw the Deputy Secretary of Defense Kyes submit a revised FY 1955 budget calling for significantly lower spending, which was presented as a logical part of a three-year program to reach the FY 1957 strengths submitted by the JCS.[65] This revised FY 1955 budget had actually been hastily produced over the last few days following the largest "disconnect" of the New Look—the difference between JCS 2101/113 and the original FY 1955 budget submission.

Disconnecting Budgets and Strategy: FY 55 Budget Development Sep-Dec 53

Budgeting for a large and complex government organization such as the DOD has always required extensive preparation time. Although the current Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS) was not in place, budget timelines in the 1950s reflected the laborious handwork required in that pre-computer era. Budget Director Dodge began pressing for a DOD FY 1955 budget submission as early as July 1953. He wanted figures finalized by December 1953 for approval and forwarding to Congress in January 1954 (as required by law).[66] FY 1955 would begin on 1 July 1954.

This meant that one of the first tasks facing the newly sworn in JCS on 15 August was overseeing their FY 1955 budget submissions (in addition to presenting the *Sequoia* concept to the NSC and working on NSC 162). Secretary Wilson worked hard to hold off on preparing a budget for FY 1955 until the current strategic review was complete, but he was overruled by President Eisenhower in September.[67] This forced Secretary Wilson to direct the Joint Chiefs to put together rough cost estimates by early October 1953.[68] Once those were approved, more detailed work would be required to finish the completed budget. Snyder refers to this as the "Interim Look."

The Interim Look was submitted to Secretary Wilson on 2 October 1953. It reflected few of the concepts being discussed in the New Look, with no major changes recommended in existing forces. The rationale for this was that no reduction had been noted in the threat, no changes had been made in foreign commitments, and no new policies implemented concerning use of atomic weapons.[69] The total budget requests amounted to $43 billion in FY 1955 expenditures, compared to a $34 billion ceiling for a balanced budget.[70]

Secretary Wilson, Admiral Radford, and Mr. Wilfred J. McNeil (the Defense Department's Comptroller) presented these figures to the NSC on 13 October 1953. Not surprisingly, the NSC was less than thrilled. Admiral Radford's main defense was that the Chiefs were forced to plan for several contingencies barring a major change in national strategy—particularly the potential use of nuclear weapons. He also noted that it would be difficult to reduce manpower until fewer forces were deployed overseas.[71]

The NSC did not approve or reject the Interim Look. Instead, the services were told to refine their budget figures for FY 1955 "on a genuine austerity basis" but without cutting combat forces.[72] In practice, this meant that the defense budget entered the laborious slide-rule and worksheet process of adding details without clear guidance on specific cuts. The New Look would proceed on "dual tracks:" the Everest Committee and the FY 1955 budget preparation.[73]

The administration did pass along several suggested changes during the fall, but these were made as non-mandatory suggestions or "targets" which were generally ignored. In early November, Secretary Wilson suggested a 10 percent cut in Army, Navy, and Marine Corps manpower. This was followed by a 25 November request for an "honest-to-goodness" effort to make the requested cuts, along with the suggestion that such cuts could be made without reducing combat forces. An additional argument was made that the proposed cut represented a logical first step towards the lower force levels proposed for FY 1957 by the Everest committee. However, the Army strongly disputed these proposed cuts,[74] which General Ridgway felt were politically driven.[75]

The two-track budget and strategy disconnect was wrenched back together in early December 1953. The refined version of the original request was submitted to Secretary

Wilson on 5 December, along with papers noting that the cuts requested earlier could not be made without reducing combat capability below requirements. Secretary Wilson was thus faced with an FY 1955 budget holding the line at 20 Army divisions (for example) while the chiefs debated between 12 and 14 divisions in FY 1957. After consulting with President Eisenhower, Secretary Wilson ordered a 10 percent cut in Army, Navy, and Marine Corps manpower.[76] The services hastily revised their budget estimates in time to submit the budget approved at the 15 December 1953 NSC meeting.

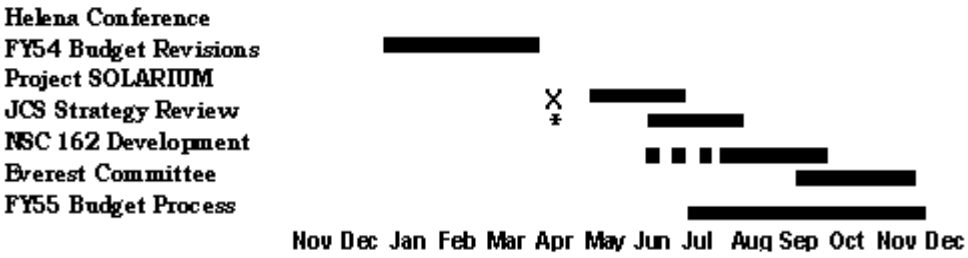
The strategy process of the New Look was complete. Its results were a steady drop in the overall budget out until FY 1957, with a fairly flat projection from that time onwards to handle the "long haul." The budget cuts were concentrated on the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps while Air Force funding held steady. This relative decline in land and sea power was also reflected in the projected drop of Army personnel by about 1/3 and Navy/Marine Corps cuts of 15 to 20 percent compared with original FY 1957 budget projections. The containment strategy of previous administrations was modified by relying more on local manpower for ground forces while the United States provided air and sea power—with a clear approval to plan on using nuclear weapons if it was considered military advantageous.

The New Look as a Planning Process

The New Look was a complicated planning process which involved (at various times) the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (and the Joint Staff), the individual service departments and military staffs, the Secretaries of State and Treasury, the Bureau of the Budget, and other government agencies. No process this extensive and time-consuming can be completely characterized in short, punchy

statements. However, the discussion above does support some generalizations that can be used to analyze how the process of the New Look interacted with the efforts.

The New Look was more of a sequential than a parallel planning process. Although there was no initial timeline laid out for the New Look, the sequence of events displayed in Figure 1 reveals how each aspect of the New Look was taken more or less in turn.



Note. The x and * symbols refer to when the Solarium meeting was held in the White House and when the nominations for the new Joint Chiefs were made, respectively. The dashed line for shows when the NSC Planning Board was developing NSC 162, with the solid line marking when the full NSC was debating and revising what became NSC 162/2.

Figure 2. New Look Timeline, 1952-1953

After a preliminary discussions and a "stop-gap" adjustment of the FY 1954 budget, Project Solarium was designed and established to evaluate large-scale strategic options. An additional review focussing on the military aspects of the national strategy was provided by the new JCS from their *Sequoia* conference. The NSC used both efforts to draft NSC 162, which in turn became the subject for debates involving the NSC and the Joint Chiefs. While NSC 162 was in its final stages, the Everest Committee began working on translating the overall strategy into force structure proposals.

The largest overlap in the New Look process involved the FY 1955 budget process that produced the Interim Look. The extensive labor involved meant this effort had to start well before the submission of the Everest Committee proposals (JCS 2101/111),

much less the approved force structure laid out in JCS 2101/113. While the Everest Committee failed to provide force structure proposals for FYs 1955 and 1956 as their original charter requested, their suspense of no later than 1 December made this a moot point as far as the services were concerned. In theory, the services could have used their own submissions to the Everest Committee to modify FY 1955 proposals. However, this would have involved essentially committing to cuts before they were approved—something rarely done, even when the cuts are agreed with.

The sequential planning process used in the New Look is fairly close to the "classic" strategic planning process discussed in Chapter II, with the development of the overall national security strategy setting the stage for new national military strategy and subsequent force structure decisions. It allowed a broad consensus to develop within the Eisenhower administration on the rationale behind the New Look and got most players not in DOD to sign on.

The New Look was primarily a top-down process. General Ridgway would certainly agree—he described the New Look as a "directed verdict."[77] The Project Solarium task forces, the JCS planning effort, and the Everest Committee all received written and verbal charters which provided clear guidance on what their tasks were. Leadership provided feedback during parts of the process (such as at NSC meetings), and were willing to dictate answers when they felt it necessary.[78] The down side to this was the bitterness exemplified by those such as Ridgway who felt pressured to compromise what they saw as their professional ethics.

The New Look was (broadly speaking) a threat-based process. This may seem counter-intuitive: how can a plan which spent so much time emphasizing the need to cut

spending be described as threat-based rather than resource-based? There was broad consensus that the U.S. needed to disengage from peripheral operations and reconstitute a strategic reserve to meet the military threat. But the fiscal targets pushed by congressional Republicans, the Treasury Department, and the Bureau of the Budget seemed to place resource considerations ahead of military security.

The key to this argument is that the Eisenhower administration believed that the Soviet Union tended to have the advantage because they were perceived as operating in accordance with a long-range plan. By ramping tensions upwards and downwards, the communists could manipulate their short-term focussed opponents into taking actions against its long-term national interests—ultimately leading to economic collapse. To counter this, a steady level of military spending capable of both meeting the near term threat of the large Soviet military and being sustainable over "the long haul."[79]

This tension between the military and economic threats faced by the nation were reflected in deliberations throughout the New Look. However, resource concerns only predominated when linked with a strategy. The FY 1954 cuts were made in programs that involved committing money for future years, with minimal if any impact on current force levels.[80] Budget cutters were frequently disappointed when they pressed for cuts without a strategy to back it up[81] and defeated in NSC debates over placing the economic threat ahead of the military threat.[82] The need for a strategy to deal with the military threat made Secretary of Treasury Humphrey one of the leading advocates for incorporating more use of atomic weapons in national policy.[83]

Similarly, other participants in the New Look felt that one threat (in their case, the military one) dominated the other. The main difference in how they viewed the process

was that budget cutters were willing to accept the military threat as real (no big surprise in the early Cold War era). In contrast, General Ridgway was not convinced an economic threat existed at all.[84]

The New Look relied on committees and expert judgement. This was an era when systems analyses techniques were in their infancy and the first computers were devoted to helping develop the hydrogen bomb.[85] Throughout the New Look, different committees of experts and advocates were formed to handle specific problems. This did pull in a wide range of viewpoints, with the strength of most arguments based on the credibility of professional expertise as well as logic (a factor which operated to General Ridgway's disadvantage—as Secretary Wilson commented, the President was fairly experienced in military matters).[86]

Relying on professional expertise did pose a problem for others—when could one safely accept or reject it? Congressional committees of that era were used to according military opinion with some respect even if they disagreed with it. However, the tensions between CJCS Bradley and congressional Republicans showed that there were limits to this acceptance.

Today's experts—military and civilian—often buttress their professional expertise with analytical models (often complex computer models) which purport to provide "objective" rather than subjective support to their arguments. Such methods had become quite commonplace by 1996—the year Congress tasked the Pentagon to carry out the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). In what other ways did the QDR process differ from the New Look? How did these differences influence the execution of the QDR? We now turn to Chapter IV to explore these questions.

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[74] *Ibid.*, pp. 444-446

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[81] Eisenhower, pp. 130

[82] Watson, pp. 23

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[85] Halberstam, pp. 92-93

[86] Ridgway, pp. 287

Chapter 4

The Quadrennial Defense Review of 1996-1997

Historical Context

The QDR was the most recent in a series of post-Cold war defense reviews. By now it seems cliché to run through the rapid changes in the modern world—the collapse of the Soviet Union, the possibility of computer-based "information warfare," the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and the rise of peacekeeping/humanitarian operations in Somalia, Bosnia, and other places around the world. Without a single dominant enemy, the United States national security context shifted to a more complex picture of regional threats (Iraq, North Korea, etc.), non-traditional actors such as terrorists, drug cartels, or even religious groups capable of carrying out unconventional attacks with deadly effect, and an array of concerns from environmental to humanitarian issues which threatened our safety and/or our values.

Several strategic studies were done to come to grips with these changes, including the Base Force of 1991, the Bottom-Up Review (BUR) of 1993, and the Committee on Roles and Missions (CORM) of 1995. United States defense spending dropped from $400 billion (in constant FY 1997 dollars) in 1985 (28 percent of the national budget and 7 percent of the gross national product) to $250 billion in 1997 (15 percent of the budget, and 3.2 percent of the gross national product).[1]

Yet dissatisfaction remained, spurred by the perception that the U.S. military was essentially mired in a Cold War posture increasingly disconnected from the challenges it would face in the future.[2] Other critics charged that our forces were not really capable of fighting and winning the two nearly simultaneous regional conflicts called for in the BUR or that the strategy itself was flawed.[3] Stresses and strains caused by frequent deployments and operations raised the question whether the BUR force structure was suited for sustaining the frequent deployments called for when implementing a "National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement."[4]

These challenges were exacerbated by the question of affordability—could current defense spending levels sustain the BUR force structure? A growing need to modernize military equipment was colliding with the high costs of sustaining ongoing operations.[5] Little help was expected from increased future defense spending given an aging U.S. population (which would require additional non-defense spending) and the push to balance the U.S. budget.

Such questions led to increasing pressure for a new review of defense policy. The 1995 CORM study recommended that each new presidential administration conduct "a comprehensive strategy and force review" as an interagency activity directed by the National Security Council—a "Quadrennial Strategy Review."[6] This recommendation was endorsed by the Secretary of Defense, and was cited by Congress in the Military Force Structure Review Act of 1996.[7]

The Military Force Structure Review Act marked a significant difference from the New Look—a legislative rather than executive tasking. The Clinton Administration had already been in office for over three years; however, it was dealing with a skeptical

Republican-led Congress. The level of congressional dissatisfaction with existing defense planning can be inferred from the fact that Congress chose to put the requirement into legislation, which was passed by a wide margin.[8] The Force Structure Review Act also included a requirement for a "red team"—the National Defense Panel (NDP), which would provide an independent assessment of the QDR and follow on with its own suggestions for alternative force structure options.[9] The next administration would thus be faced with congressional mandates and timelines for action regardless of who won the election.

Study Limitations

Analyzing the QDR offered the usual research challenges facing a "recent history" study. Interviewing participants provided a rich source of material; however, most participants preferred being interviewed under non-attribution because they remain active members (military or civilian) of the Department of Defense. Over 20 such interviews were conducted. This study also draws on additional interviews conducted by the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA), the Center for Naval Analysis (CNA), and the RAND Corporation studies of the QDR. None of these studies cited specific sources for attribution, but all provided valuable insights.

This study will cite information gathered from interviews as "interviews" (similar to Snyder's citations for the New Look). Information cited from other researchers will be attributed to those studies, but readers tracing these citations will face the same lack of attribution to specific sources.

A more recent problem facing researchers is the disappearance of much of the "paper trail" associated with staff work in today's Pentagon. The author was astonished to find

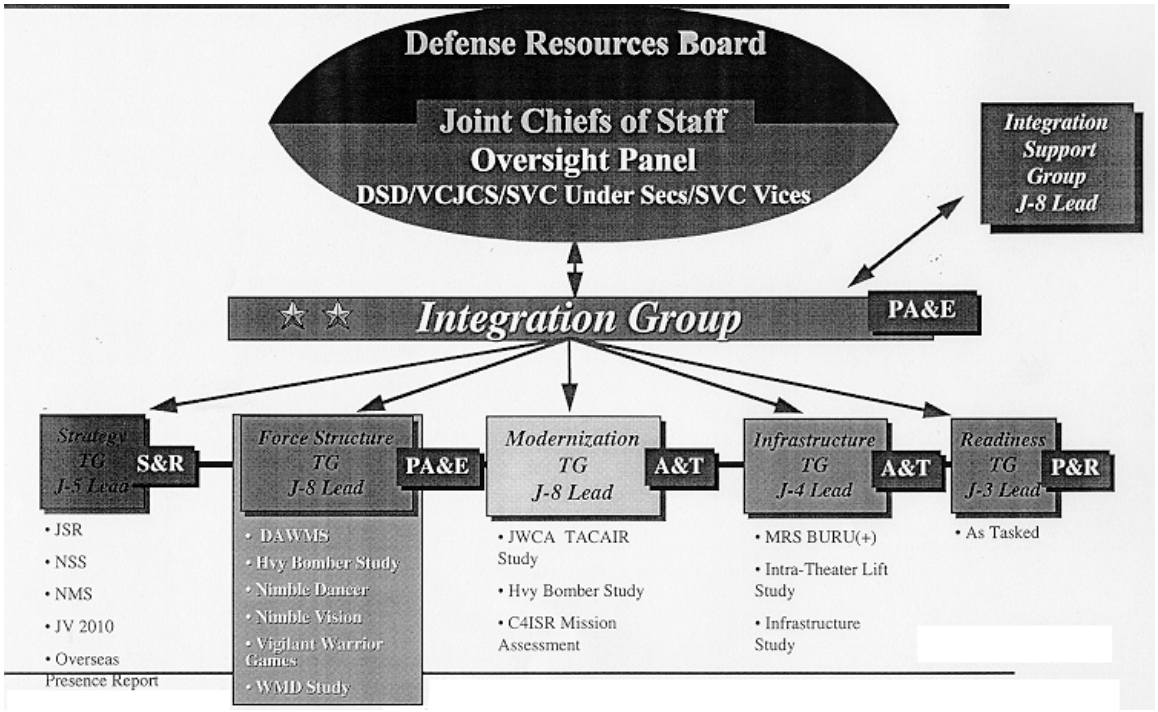
that relatively few formal memoranda or letters cover the QDR (compared to the New Look). Most documentation consisted of hardcopies of electronic briefings and other informal notes. Several versions usually exist for any given file, which makes figuring out which versions were shown to whom a difficult challenge. This will probably become a growing problem for future researchers—in a "paperless office," primary source materials may become harder to fix with certainty.

Preparation Phase: Jun-Oct 96

The inaugural phase of the QDR overlapped with the closing phase of the 1996 presidential election. This overlap allowed the Joint Staff (JS) to lay much of the initial groundwork for the QDR—the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) stayed almost completely out of the loop at this point to avoid potential political complications.[10] Major General Hamilton, USA (vice J-8 on the JS, responsible for long range force structure planning) formed a group of four action officers (one from each service) to conduct preliminary planning. Unlike the New Look, the QDR process would have an overall design laying out different panels and groups, how their products were to be integrated, and timelines for task completions from start to finish.

General Hamilton's tiger team got to work in the late summer of 1996. They had to address the specific areas tasked by the legislation, as well as meeting what they felt was the congressional intent: to "produce something innovative." They tried assembling lists of issues and questions to be answered, matching them with various offices who should be involved with solving them. This matching led to the idea of panels—forming groups of various sizes tasked to handle a group of related issues. Each panel would be co-chaired by OSD and JS representatives. Membership would include representatives from

all of the services and related agencies with DOD, providing a wide range of talents, expertise, and viewpoints. The original proposal suggested five panels—Strategy, Force Structure, Readiness, Infrastructure, and Modernization. Two additional panels (Information Operations/ Intelligence and Human Resources) were added later (Figure 3).[11]



Source: From Joint Staff off-site briefing, 29 Jun 96 in RAND briefing, subject: QDR Insights v. 10, 15 Dec 97.

Figure 3. Original JS QDR Analytic Concept

Part of the preparatory work involved the conduct of preliminary studies to support QDR analyses. These included various computer modeling works (from the Deep Attack Weapons Mix Study [DAWMS] and other analyses), workshops, and some service self-initiated cost estimates in the force structure area. Of particular importance was an "unusually robust" Joint Strategy Review (JSR) and preparatory work for what would become the Defense Program Projections (DPP) briefing. The JSR was a routinely

scheduled work that received extra attention to help lay the groundwork for an overarching QDR strategy.[12]

This strategy work was a priority for the JS due to a desire to look how the forces were meeting the day-to-day missions. The JS aimed for a strategy driven QDR, and the challenge of day to day missions was seen as inherent to a National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement.[13] Both parties had provided bipartisan (if sometimes grudging) support for these missions.[14]

Although OSD remained mostly on the sidelines during this period, some senior defense officials did provide perspectives on what they saw as important for the QDR. For example, Deputy Secretary of Defense John P. White (who had chaired the CORM study) commented that the QDR needed to be "a fundamental stock taking." "The goal is not to rationalize and protect what we have now. The goal is to visualize and pursue what we will need tomorrow." He went on to raise four themes which he felt would affect how the review would be shaped: a wider set of potential scenarios reflecting plausible operations, resources ("the one that underlies everything"), the revolution in military affairs (RMA), and making fundamental institutional changes in DOD. To do this, Deputy Secretary White envisioned a "highly collaborative effort" involving all key elements of the department.[15]

The individual services also made preparations. The basic plan was more or less the same—the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy all established ad hoc task forces led by two-star generals and designed to act as coordination cells for their respective services in the QDR. Exactly what they would be coordinating was still vague; the services received very little solid guidance from the JS (who were still finalizing the plan

for the QDR) or OSD during this phase. Their apprehensions were not reduced by a remark apparently made by Mr. Bill Lynn (OSD) to the effect that the QDR could involve a "10/15% cut off the top" of current force structure.[16]

Final Planning Phase: Nov-Dec 96

President Clinton's re-election opened the door for OSD to fully engage in QDR planning. OSD co-chairs were designated for the different panels and groups, and the senior leadership began finalizing the design, objectives, and specific questions to be answered by each panel. Many participants from the Services perceived a different focus from OSD than they perceived from the JS, one aimed less at strategy and more at "bean-counting."[17]

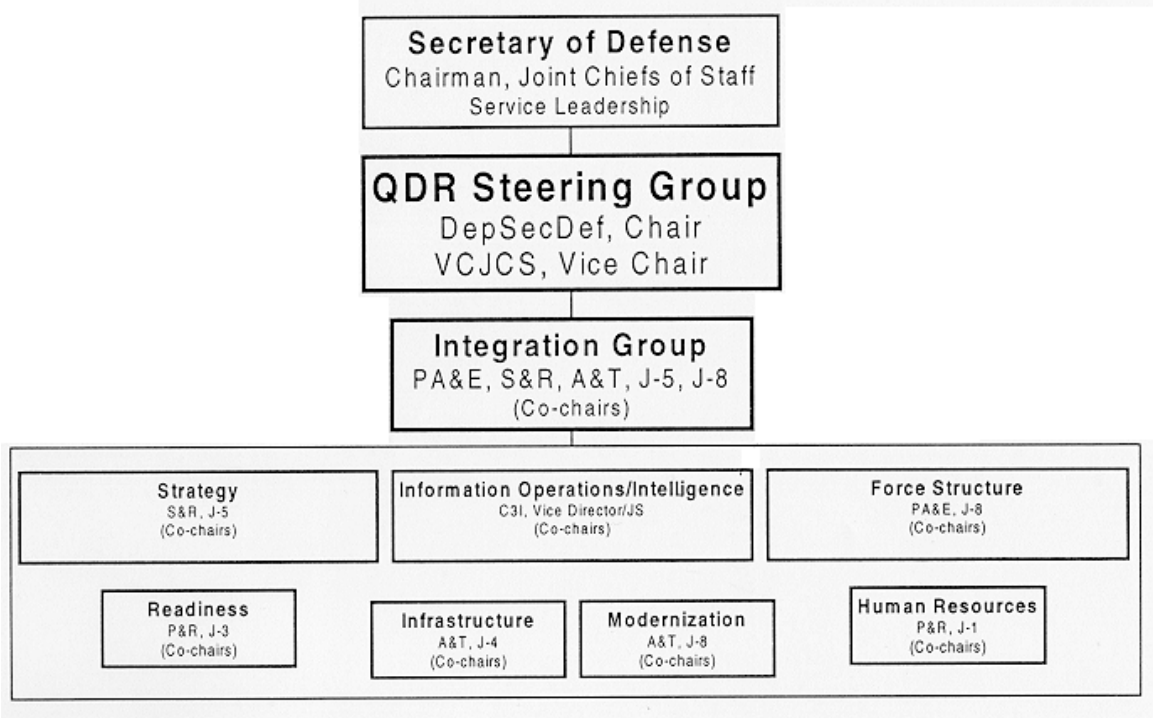
The strategy itself was the subject of considerable disagreement. The original strategy floated within the JSR underscored the high tempo of humanitarian and peacekeeping operations under the current national security strategy. Early drafts greatly downplayed the two major regional contingency (MRC) emphasis from the BUR in favor of such missions, and a senior official within the JS suggested that the QDR force structure "may well equal or even exceed the size of the Bottom-Up Review force" in response. This also implied a shift in priorities towards forces more suited for the lower end of the conflict spectrum rather than the higher (MRC) end.[18]

This emphasis quickly proved controversial, and the JSR was held up while the arguments continued. Other services strenuously objected to a JSR they felt favored the Army (because Army forces were touted as being more suitable for humanitarian operations while Air Force and Navy programs supposedly better suited for high intensity conflict were downplayed).[19] Participants also described a disagreement between OSD

and the JS over whether the JSR strategy should be considered a baseline for the QDR, with OSD arguing that the JSR represented non-binding preliminary work rather than a baseline.[20]

The QDR passed a significant milestone on 12 December 1996, with the presentation of the QDR Design and Approach Briefing. This "took the QDR public" and provided the first open look at how the QDR was to be accomplished. It was put together after "about four weeks" of deliberations by an informal group headed by Deputy Secretary of Defense White,[21] who took the lead in presenting it along with the outgoing Secretary of Defense (William Perry), the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) General John M Shalikashvili, and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Mr. Kenneth H. Bacon.[22]

The QDR Design and Approach briefing laid out a process intended to involve assessments from all elements of the Department of Defense, including the services, theater commanders-in-chief (CINCs), and other DOD institutions. These inputs were to be provided through the QDR's panel structure (Figure 4), which remained close to its original JS design. Also included were an Integration Group (IG) charged with integrating "all this massive amount of information that will be delivered up by the various panels,"[23] a Steering Group (SG), and a higher oversight board consisting of the Secretary of Defense, the CJCS, and the individual service chiefs.



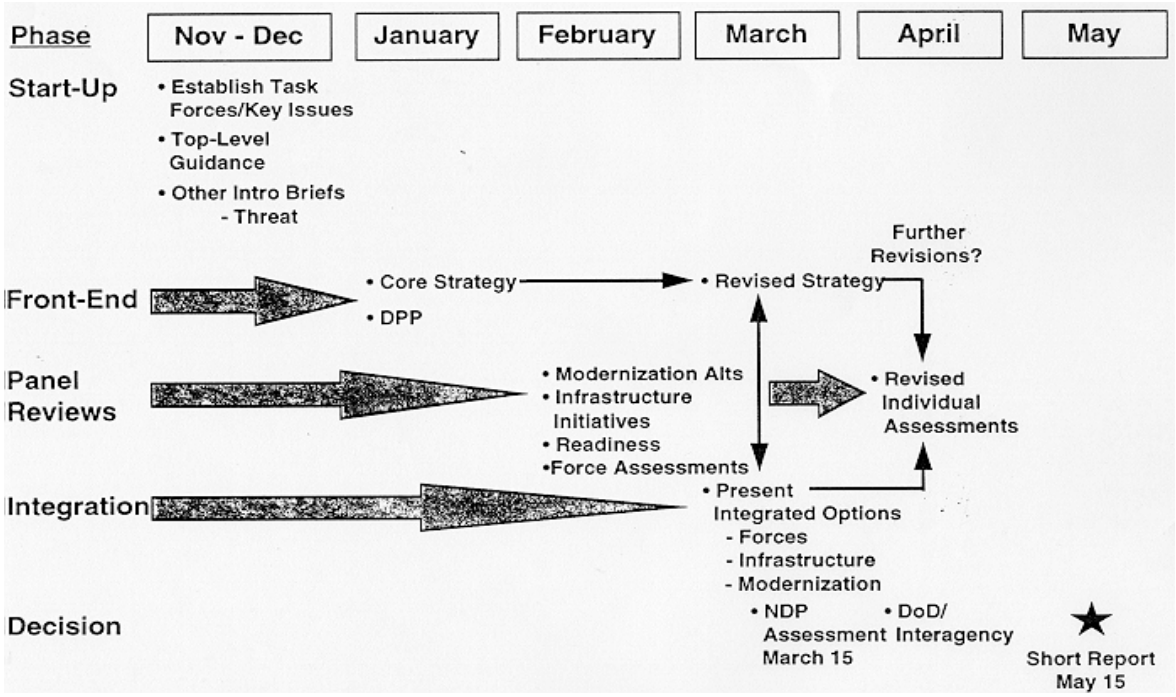
Source: From Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Strategy and Threat Reduction briefing, subject: Quadrennial Defense Review, 12 Dec 96.

Figure 4. QDR Organization (Dec 96)

Each of the seven panels received a list of objectives and critical decisions which they were to address. It is worth noting that the Strategy Panel was still charged with developing an overall strategy for the QDR—though several of their "critical decisions" emphasized points raised in the JSR, the JS's efforts were apparently not considered a specific baseline for the QDR effort. The JSR itself was completed some time in December 1996.[24]

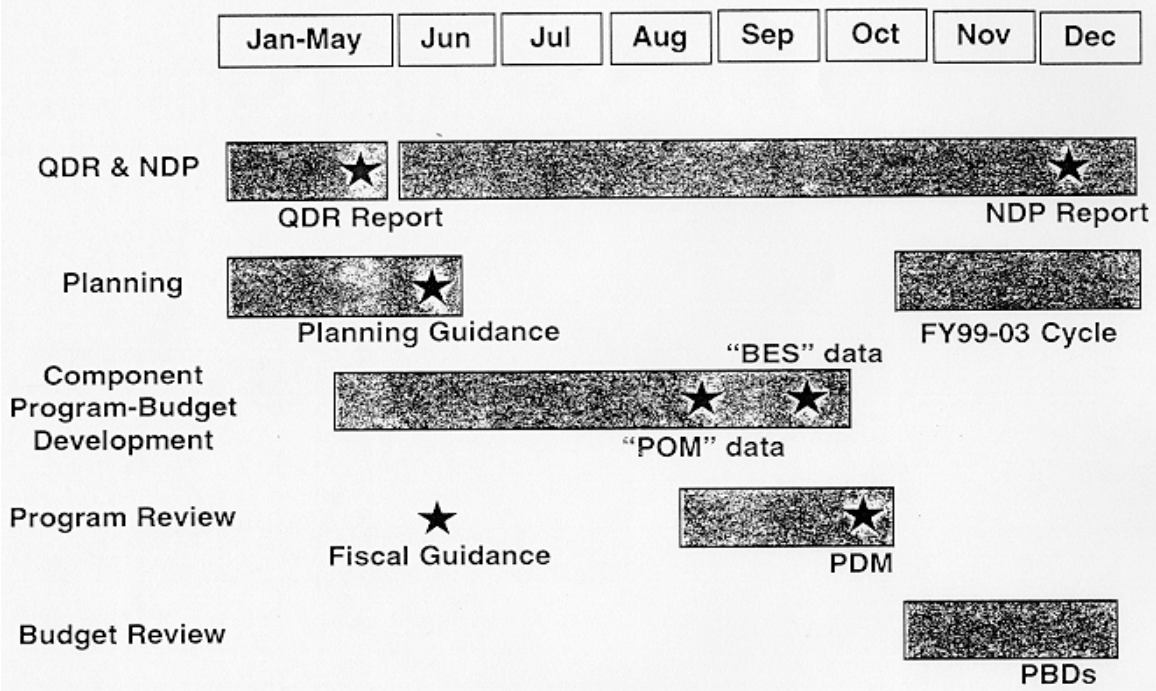
Deputy Secretary White also presented a timeline for completing the QDR (Figure 5). Heavy emphasis was placed on completing the report by 15 May 1997 so it could provide input for the 1997 Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS) cycle (Figure 6) as well as meet the Congressional timeline (which had already been slipped

with respect to formation of the NDP). This urgency meant that work had to be started despite the upcoming transition in OSD leadership from Secretary Perry to Secretary Cohen, who had to await Senate confirmation before engaging in the QDR. The panels had to engage immediately in a "shotgun manner" to meet their timelines.



Source: From Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Strategy and Threat Reduction briefing, subject: Quadrennial Defense Review, 12 Dec 96.

Figure 5. QDR Schedule



Source: From Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Strategy and Threat Reduction briefing, subject: Quadrennial Defense Review, 12 Dec 96

Figure 6. PPBS Timelines for CY 1997 (including QDR and NDP)

First Round: The Engagement Phase Jan-early Feb 97

One of the first panels to engage was the Strategy Panel, many of whom had been involved in the JSR. Their challenge was to get a strategy out to the other panels in time to influence their deliberations. A basic memorandum providing the "thrust" of the QDR strategy was sent to the different panels in January 1997, along with some issues for the other panels to address. Strategy panel members did note that some panels "got it" while others did not link their actions back to the initial strategy.[25] This may have been because the different panels were very busy working their own issues and were awaiting a signed off version of the strategy before committing to major actions based on it.

Another problem was that the strategy was "so all encompassing that it provided only marginal help for the difficult resource decisions."[26]

Many panel members were concerned that they were trying to conduct "fundamental reassessments of dozens of key questions" with little guidance on what specific topics to focus on.[27] Almost all interviewees noted the paucity of detailed guidance on almost any issues beyond that provided in the QDR Design and Approach Briefing. One senior participant viewing the process from one of the service "coordination cells" described this phase of the QDR as follows:

No overall written guidance or charter was provided from OSD. Panels have developed their own informal charters, but they've never been formally approved by the SSG. Without written guidance there's neither an overall coordination of the various panels to reach a single goal, nor any way to ensure panels are doing what was intended. For example, the Force Structure panel has recently changed its title to Force Assessment and redirected its efforts towards analyzing the results of the Dynamic Commitment wargame. The Modernization panel had expected the Force Structure panel to provide alternate force structures for the Modernization panel to use for its analysis. Without written guidance to either panel, they're essentially on independent operations.[28]

Another effect noticed by the different services was that the different panels operated in very different manners. Some Modernization panel task force interim reports were described as prepared by the OSD task force representatives rather than representing a consensus report. The lack of charters meant that the co-chairs were not bound to present consensus or dissenting opinions to the Integration or Steering Group. Differences in

such procedures meant that the Integration Group was seeing different types of input from the different panels without knowing how the answers were assembled.

The Defense Program Projections (DPP) briefing was tossed into this mix some time in January 1997.[29] This briefing was primarily authored by Mr. Lynn, and it outlined the challenge of finding and keeping about $60 billion per year to maintain procurement. The problem was attributed to the steep decline in procurement spending after the cold war and was made worse by the tendency to "migrate" spending each year from procurement to operations to pay for contingency operations.[30] The DPP was successful in convincing many that the modernization funding shortfall was a serious problem.[31]

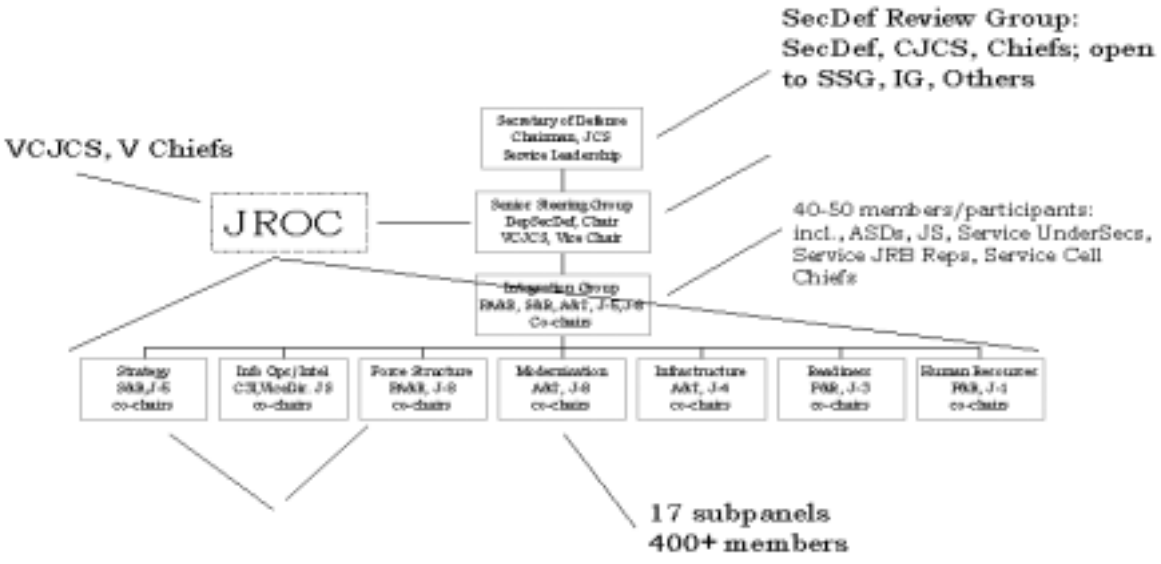
By late January, the individual panels began briefing the Integration Group and the Steering Group. The intention behind these groups was to provide a kind of "star chamber" to put the different inputs together and provide feedback to guide further action by the panels. However, the desire to make the process inclusive made the Integration Group and Steering Group quite large (30-50 members each). This made them useful as a venue to keep participants informed, but many participants felt the groups were too large to be effective.[32]

"Back-channel" communication pipelines were also striving to keep different QDR participants informed on what was happening. All of the individual services had their coordination cells operating in high gear trying to keep track of all these details and keep their representatives operating along more or less consistent paths. OSD and the JS participants were also providing occasional inputs to their superiors, though not in a coordinated manner. The services worried that different co-chairs were briefing their

superiors on preliminary panel results before they were cleared by the panels (much less the Integration Group or Steering Group).[33]

Second Round: the Assessment Phase mid-Feb – Mar 97

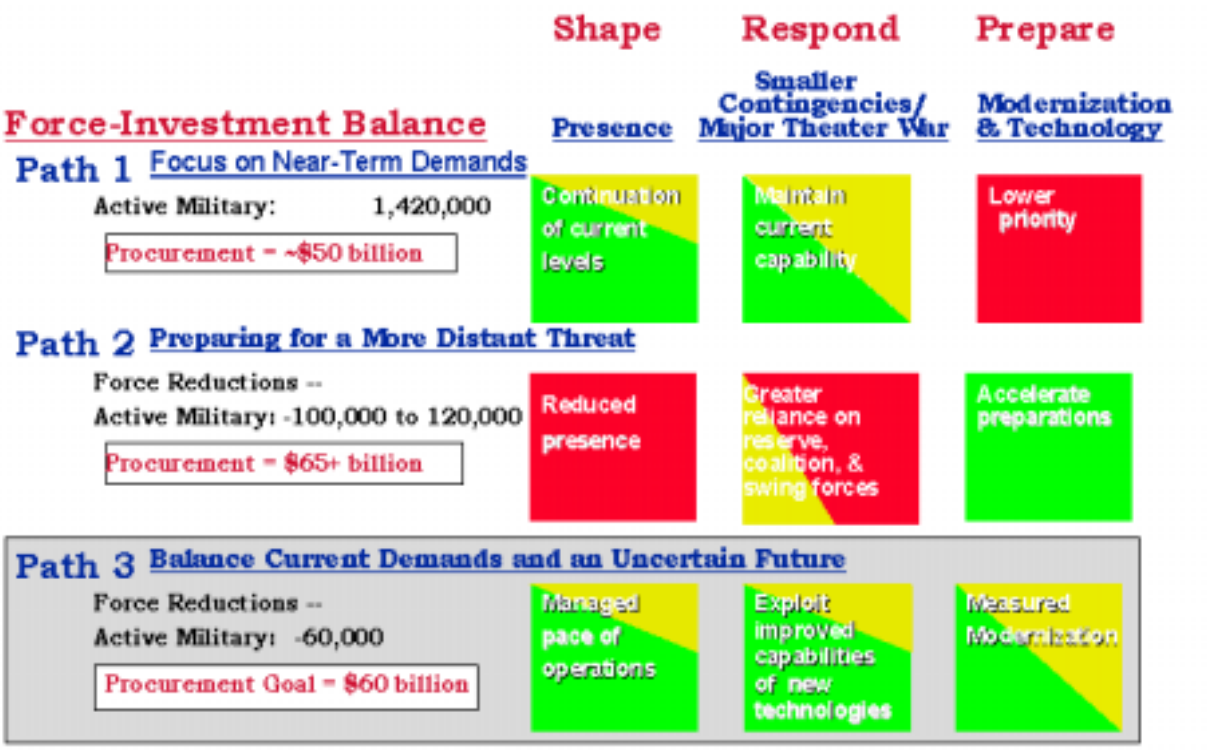
Some time in early to mid-February the Joint Requirements Oversight Committee (JROC) stepped into the QDR process by having all QDR panels brief the JROC before going on to the SSG (Figure 7). This marked the beginning of an evolution in the QDR from an almost completely bottom-up process to a more top down one—and participants noted this change. While many OSD personnel viewed the ad hoc entry of the JROC into the QDR process as a complicating factor, others, including many of the uniformed QDR participants, believed that the additional guidance and feedback provided by the JROC helped the process despite the additional workload.[34]



Source: From draft briefing, Institute for Defense Analyses, subject: QDR Lessons Learned Study, 12 Jan 98.

Figure 7. QDR Organization (Feb-Mar 97)

The Integrated Paths briefing (Figure 8) was also given for the first time during this phase. This briefing outlined three overall philosophies to use for comparison: concentrate on today's missions, concentrate on preparing for the future, and balancing the two.[35] While it was criticized as providing something of a "Goldilocks" structure (one option too hot, one too cold, one just right), the Integrated Paths briefing did give participants a way to package options for forwarding "up the line."[36]



Source: These three "paths" gave QDR participants three overall philosophies to use for organizing options. From draft briefing, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Strategy and Threat Reduction, subject: Quadrennial Defense Review, 15 Dec 97.

Figure 8. QDR Integrated Paths

The assessment phase also faced a major challenge. As the DPP had shown, there was a major problem in funding modernization for the future. The Infrastructure panel was originally seen as the big "bill payer" for this effort, but it was unable to come close

to the $30 billion in savings anticipated for it by the Defense Science Board.[37] This triggered a classic "cut drill"—and none of the services were eager to step forward and offer cuts unilaterally for fear of taking most of the hit themselves. Secretary Cohen (an active QDR participant since his 24 January 1997 swearing in) directed the services to assess a range of proportional cuts in order to fund as much of their modernization programs as possible. This approach showed just how high a priority fixing procurement was for DOD—but studying cuts without a strategy to support them locked in the perception that the QDR was, after all, a resource allocation drill.[38]

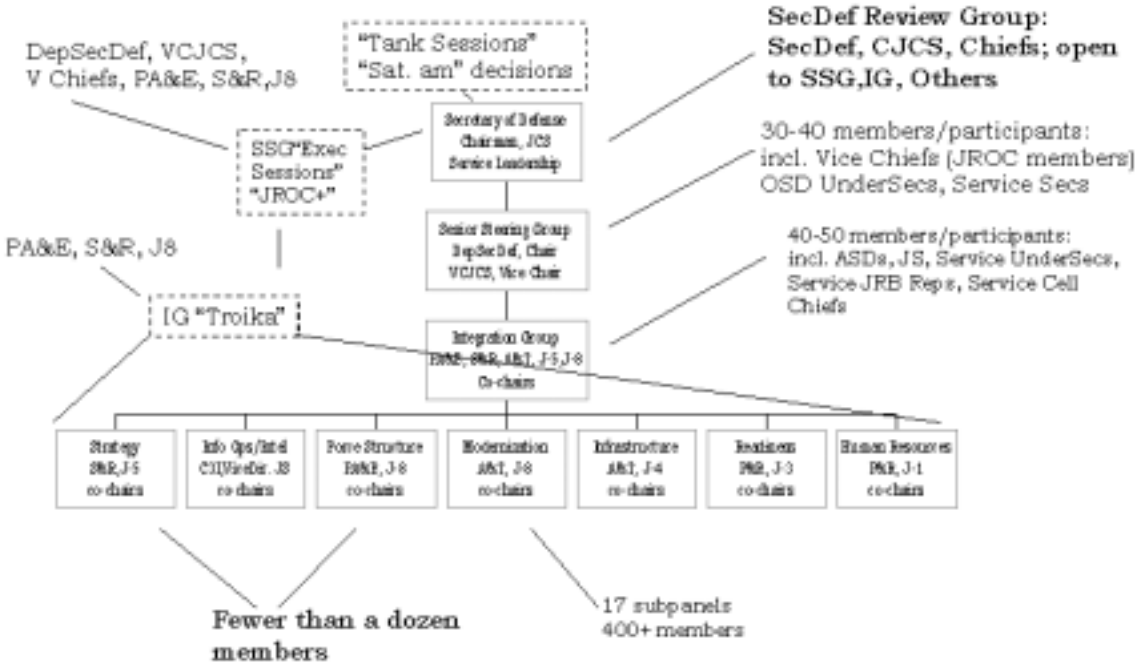
Despite all of this activity, the ambitious QDR timelines were mostly met. Many participants assumed that Secretary Cohen would request a slip in the 15 May deadline after assuming office; instead, he reaffirmed the original timeline (and left some scrambling to make up time).[39] While the participation of the JROC was not anticipated, the overall timeline shown in Figure 5 were still valid. The major exception to this was that the NDP had gotten off to a very late start because of delays in forming the panel. The NDP missed its 15 March suspense to provide a written assessment of the QDR. Feedback was provided, but it came as verbal feedback to panel participants briefing the NDP (a fourth audience for tired action officers to meet with—the IG, JROC, SSG, and now the NDP).[40]

Third Round: the End Game Apr-early May 97

The approach of deadlines saw the QDR rapidly sharpen in its focus to key players and issues. The first step in this migration was the formation of a streamlined IG and SSG (Figure 9). The Integration Group effectively became the "Troika"—Bill Lynn (OSD PA&E), Ted Warner (OSD S&R), and Lieutenant General McCloud (JS J-8).

These three also participated in the SSG "executive sessions," with Deputy Secretary of Defense White, the VCJCS, and the vice chiefs—a group which some referred to as the "JROC plus."[41]

These groups took care of most of the final issues, such as approving the overall QDR strategy. However, some of the hardest issues (like force structure) were reserved for the very highest decision levels in the Pentagon. These included "Tank" sessions involving the Secretary and a few civilian aides with the CJCS, VCJCS, and the Service Chiefs in the CJCS "Tank" room—an expanded cast when compared to the JCS deliberations over the Everest Committee report in 1953. There were also "Saturday A.M. Sessions" involving the Secretary, key civilian aides, the CJCS, and the VCJCS (but not the Service Chiefs). The Secretary also held private discussions with other high level QDR participants in a variety of contexts—phone calls, one-on-one meetings, etc.[42]



Source: From draft briefing, Institute for Defense Analyses, subject: QDR Lessons Learned Study, 12 Jan 98.

Figure 9. QDR Organization (Apr-early May 97—the "End Game")

These meetings received inputs from QDR panels, but did not necessarily provide feedback as they made their decisions. One example of this was the cuts in F-18E/F and F-22 programs, which startled lower level QDR participants referred to as an "11th hour super-secret decision" taken outside of the QDR panel structure.[43]

Force structure was largely left alone after certain cuts in modernization programs and infrastructure cuts, but the services were levied cuts in personnel end strength. Each received an equivalent amount that needed to be paid for: for example, the Navy had to produce savings equal to the cost of a battle group (dubbed a BGE, or battle group equivalent, in the acronym loving halls of the Pentagon). The Air Force and Navy took most of their cuts from the active force, while the Army chose to make most of their cuts in the Reserves and National Guard.[44]

Results

The results of the QDR were fairly minor compared to the sweeping changes following the New Look. Force structure was almost completely unchanged (Table 4), with most of the cuts already present in the five year defense program. The cuts in manpower (Table 5) also look relatively small compared to the New Look, or even since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. However, this should not be surprising: the New Look was an effort to drastically cut defense spending, while the QDR looked towards how to adapt the force for the future with a more or less steady-state budget.

Overtime: The NDP and the QDR

The NDP used two different mechanisms to fulfill its requirements to comment on the QDR. During QDR execution, the NDP provided feedback to QDR panels from

February through April.[45] The NDP also wrote a formal assessment of the QDR that was given to the Secretary of Defense and Congress in May 1997.[46] The NDP assessment agreed with many of the elements found in the QDR, including particularly favorable comments on the published QDR strategy. However, the panel went on to state that there was "insufficient connectivity between the strategy on the one hand, and force structure, operational concepts, and procurement decisions on the other." The NDP assessment also stated that the QDR focussed more on near term issues than preparing for the future—setting the stage for the NDP's own report, which was required by the original legislation to take a longer term view than the QDR (2010 and beyond vs. up to 2005).[47]

Table 4. Major Elements of Force Structure

Note. From *Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review*, Office of the Secretary of Defense, May 1997, pp. 30

	FY 1997	FY 2003	QDR
ARMY			
Active Divisions	10	10	10
Reserve Personnel	582	575	530
NAVY			
Aircraft Carriers (Active/Reserve)	11/1	11/1	11/1
Air Wings (Active/Reserve)	10/1	10/1	10/1
Amphibious Ready Groups	12	12	12
Attack Submarines	73	52	50
Surface Combatants	128	131	116
AIR FORCE			
Active Fighter Wings	13	13	12+
Reserve Fighter Wings	7	7	8
Reserve Air Defense Squadrons	10	6	4
Bombers (Total)	202	187	187
MARINE CORPS			
Marine Expeditionary Forces	3	3	3

Table 5. Defense Manpower

Note. *Personnel numbers do not include Navy outsourcing initiatives planned prior to the QDR. From *Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review*, Office of the Secretary of Defense, May 1997, pp. 21.

	FY 1989	FY 1997	FY 2003	QDR
Active*	2,130,000	1,450,000	1,420,000	1,360,000
Reserve	1,170,000	900,000	890,000	835,000
Civilian*	1,110,000	800,000	720,000	640,000

Beyond this point, the NDP became a process unto itself. In brief, it originally planned a sequential process of composing alternative future environments, evaluating national security and military strategy alternatives, and deriving capabilities and proposed force structures from those alternatives. However, approximately half way through this process (in late summer 1997), the panel apparently decided that the long-term future was too uncertain to provide useful alternative force structures.[48] Instead, the NDP turned to addressing different challenges the United States will likely face in the 2010-2020 time frame and advocating a "transformation strategy" to prepare for that uncertain future.[49]

The QDR as a Planning Process

The QDR used a far different planning process than the New Look. It involved far more participants, yet was almost entirely restricted to members of the Department of Defense. It was executed on a far more ambitious time schedule than the New Look, and it was executed more or less in accordance with an overall design. How did these differences play out during the QDR, and what was their influence (if any) on the results of the QDR?

The QDR began as a bottom-up process and ended as a top-down process. This was at least partly intentional.[50] The early process was designed to be as inclusive as possible

with steadily more focussed guidance from the Integration Group and Steering Group to bring the process together.

However, some problems cropped up during execution. The original guidance was broad enough to allow the different panels and their subgroups to launch off in an almost completely uncoordinated manner. Some participants described this as "go forth and do analysis" guidance leading to "charging off in all directions."[51] The unwieldy Integration and Senior Steering Groups could not resolve these problems.

An ad hoc solution appeared when the JROC imposed itself on the process. The process remained primarily a bottom up process after this imposition because the JROC did not add new agenda items, but some participants believed the JROC provided more productive feedback and act as a filter for briefings before submission to the Senior Steering Group.

However, budgetary constraints and the high priority given to funding modernization programs generated top-level pressure that drove much of the manpower intensive activity in the latter phases of the QDR. When the DPP brief and the Infrastructure Panel highlighted problems with modernization funding, the Secretary of Defense pressed the services to identify where the funds would come from, including the assessment of proportional cuts if necessary. By the time the QDR reached the "endgame" phase, decisions were being made at very senior levels. One example of this was the TACAIR cuts, which came from outside the QDR panel process. Many action officers believed that their efforts had been wasted because they felt they had unknowingly been working on the wrong problems.[52]

But did these problems influence the results of the QDR? After all, any process involving thousands of people is likely to upset somebody. However, Deputy Secretary White had already laid out the danger of unclear guidance in such a process.

Secretary Perry and I must give clear guidance on what needs to be examined and accomplished. If we don't give clear guidance, we may only get changes at the margins —status quo-plus – rather [than] the fundamental rethinking we need.[53]

Based on this narrow criterion alone, the QDR process failed. Most of the QDR participants interviewed for this study stated they felt the QDR process made it very hard to push any major changes through. There were too many panels working in uncoordinated, semi-independent fashion in a short span of time without an overall theme to make change happen. Without such a push, the natural inertia of an organization the size of the Defense Department made it necessary to push desired changes from the top late in the QDR.[54]

The QDR was a largely parallel process rather than sequential. Again, this is no surprise. OSD and the JS had originally intended to use a largely sequential process, but the time constraints imposed by Congress and budgetary process schedules forced much of the QDR actions to be accomplished in parallel fashion.

The biggest problem associated with this parallel arrangement was the inability of the QDR to evolve according to its own strategy.[55] This was not for lack of trying—the Strategy panel was to have received a running start from the JSR and draw up the original strategy by January. But problems in finalizing the JSR slowed this effort, and the other work of the QDR was well underway by the time the draft strategy was circulated.

Additional pressures (the adding of JROC and NDP briefings to the workload and the top-down drive to resolve the modernization shortfall) did not help.

The QDR became primarily a resource rather than strategy based process. Most participants (especially from the services) perceived the QDR as a cut drill because that is what they spent their time focussing on. The main interaction between panels (such as the Infrastructure panel) concerned resources, and the big push in the Assessment phase was finding ways to resolve the modernization shortfall.

One result of the focus on resources was the failure to draw full conclusions from the new QDR strategy. The JS had an arguable case: if the demands faced by forces in the QDR strategy (and/or practice) were larger than those in the BUR were, one would expect the force structure to be larger than the BUR force rather than smaller. The QDR strategy explicitly adds ongoing small-scale contingencies (SSCs) to the BUR's 2-MRC/MTW baseline. While the QDR does call for a reexamination of the forces and capabilities for fighting and winning MTWs based on increases in technology,[56] some cuts in modernization (such as the F-22) were justified on the basis of maintaining rather than increasing friendly capabilities.[57] There was no attempt to state that future MTW opponents were likely to be weaker than those assessed in the BUR, and the very difficult challenge of defining just how much force structure is needed or desirable to handle an MTW was not addressed in the QDR.

The QDR focussed almost exclusively on the military instrument of power. This was one of the critiques provided by the NDP—that a Defense Department based review will inevitably focus on military issues rather than the larger security context. Some QDR participants seconded this opinion.

However, this probably had less of an influence on the results of the QDR than first meets the eye. The 1997 QDR took place at the beginning of the Clinton administration's second term, and many senior QDR leaders (though not Secretary Cohen, of course) had already worked with other members of the administration for years. The existing National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement had an obvious influence on the shape and respond aspects of the QDR strategy. The two-way nature of this interaction was reflected in the May 1997 National Security Strategy, which redefined the entire national security strategy in the shape, respond, and prepare terms used in the QDR military strategy.[58] These factors would have been absent if a new administration had taken office in 1997, making linkage between the QDR and other instruments of power more tenuous.

The "co-chair" Arrangement between OSD and the JS led to split objectives. This was an observation made by many service participants—that for the most part OSD seemed to think the QDR was a budget drill while the JS thought it was a strategy drill. This seemed to stem from how each viewed the QDR: OSD (in general) wanted the QDR to be driven by strategy within tight budget constraints, while some in the JS and the Services wanted to explicitly reflect the burden of SSCs and the resulting high operations tempo on the force.[59]

The result of having two divergent vectors was to largely cancel each other out. OSD was able to raise awareness of the modernization shortfall, but the resolution proposed in the QDR was based on some fairly tenuous assumptions.[60] "In the end game, Joint Staff analyses…permitted the JCS and JROC to block more far-reaching force structure or programmatic changes."[61] On the other hand, the JS gained recognition for

the SSC concept that addresses the burden imposed on military forces by the need to shape the current and future security environments. However, the force that will be meeting those challenges is smaller than the BUR force rather than larger.

There was a far greater use of models and similar analytical tools in the QDR than in the New Look. In fact, the GAO had originally criticized the BUR for its use of "non-reproducible" military judgement—a clear signal that decisions based on modeling or other "objective" analyses would be preferred. The JS credited the Dynamic Commitment model created by J-8 with their success in blocking deep force structure changes.[62] Other panels used different models to estimate cost-effectiveness tradeoffs for different systems and concepts.

The problem with using such models as the ultimate arbiter is that they are *not* objective—each model must be carefully analyzed for hints of biases or other shortcomings before attempting to interpret its results. Current DOD models such as TACWAR have significant flaws in forecasting fairly basic force on force actions; they can not be relied on to provide a perfect picture of tomorrow's non-linear battlefield.[63] Even a "perfect" model (capable of providing very accurate results for a given set of inputs) would still be driven by what kinds of cases/scenarios are being run and/or what those forces are being compared against.

The NDP Report Came Very Late in the Process. The NDP report was filed in December 1997 as required by the original legislation. This gave the NDP ample time to work different issues sequentially and tie them into a coherent whole. Unfortunately, most of the 1997 budgeting process had been completed before the NDP report arrived.

This meant that even if the NDP recommended a specific change, it would have been very difficult to reflect this change in the existing budget process.

As has been shown, the planning processes used in the QDR and the New Look did play a role in how these two very differently structured strategic planning efforts played out. Future strategic planners can use these experiences as any general uses historical experience—to provide insights (though not absolute rules) on how things might work the next time. These possible insights are the subject of Chapter V.

Notes

[1] *Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review*, Office of the Secretary of Defense, May 1997, pp. iii-iv

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. iii

[3] Khalilzad, Zalmay and David Ochmanek, "Rethinking U.S. Defense Planning," *Survival*, volume 39, no. 1, Spring 1997, pp. 43-64

[4] *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, The White House, February 1996. This report was the latest in a series which is updated annually, spelling out how the current administration envisions using military forces within the larger context of overall national security policy.

[5] Khalilzad and Ochmanek, pp. 43

[6] *Directions for Defense: Report of the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1995, pp. 4-9 and 4-10

[7] National Defense Authorization Act of 1996, Public Law 104-201, Subtitle B-Force Structure Review, sections 921-926. Downloaded from http://www.defenselink.mil/topstory/quad_leg.html, 2 Dec 97.

[8] The Military Force Structure Review Act passed the U.S. Senate by a vote of 100 to 0. From JCS J-8 information paper, "Quadrennial Defense Review," 3 Sep 96

[9] National Defense Authorization Act of 1996, sec. 923 (b) and 924

[10] A point reiterated in many interviews. OSD had little to gain here—any work done would be overturned if Senator Dole won the election; even acting on the assumption that President Clinton would be re-elected could become a political issue, along with any actions suggested by OSD.

[11] Interviews

[12] Interviews. See also "QDR Lessons Learned Study, Phase I--Interim Report", draft IDA briefing file anno07427f.ppt, 12 Jan 98, pp. 16 and 17

[13] Interviews. See also QDR Roadmap Briefing, JS J-8, 9 Sep 96, slides 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8. The overall briefing of this presentation is classified "Secret," but all slides cited in this study are unclassified.

Notes

[14] Grossman, Elaine M., "QDR Strategy Review Retains Two-MRCs, But Shifts Emphasis to Ongoing Ops," *Inside the Pentagon*, Vol. 12, No. 47, November 21, 1996, pp. 1, 11-14

[15] "Deputy Secretary of Defense John White Outlines Quadrennial Defense Review Before Defense Science Board," OSD (PA) News Release, October 18, 1996. Speech occurred on 9 Oct 96. Downloaded on 27 March 1998 from http:/www.defenselink.mil/news/Oct96/b101896_bt594-96.html

[16] Interviews

[17] Interviews

[18] Grossman, Elaine M., "QDR Strategy Review Retains Two MRCs, But Shifts Emphasis to Ongoing Ops," *Inside the Pentagon*, vol. 12, no. 47, November 21, 1996, pp. 1, 11-14

[19] Grossman, Elaine M., "Air Force and Navy Object to Joint Strategy Review's Army Orientation,", *Inside the Pentagon*, vol. 12, no. 48, November 28, 1996, pp. 1, 6-8

[20] Interviews

[21] Interviews

[22] "Quadrennial Defense Review," DOD News Briefing, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), 12 Dec 1996. Downloaded 27 Mar 1998 from DefenseLink News at http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Dec96/t121296_t1212qdr.html

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] Interviews

[25] Interviews

[26] "QDR Analysis: A Retrospective Look at Joint Staff Participation," RAND Corporation briefing/working paper, November 1997 (QDR Insights v.10), pp. 14

[27] "QDR Lessons Learned Study, Phase I--Interim Report", draft IDA briefing file anno07427f.ppt, 12 Jan 98, pp. 16 and 17

[28] Interviews

[29] Interviews

[30] *Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review*, Office of the Secretary of Defense, May 1997, pp. 20

[31] Interviews. See also "QDR Lessons Learned Study, Phase I--Interim Report", draft IDA briefing file anno07427f.ppt, 12 Jan 98, pp. 26 and 27

[32] Interviews. See also "QDR Lessons Learned Study, Phase I--Interim Report", draft IDA briefing file anno07427f.ppt, 12 Jan 98, pp. 20, 21, 23

[33] Interviews

[34] Interviews. See also "QDR Lessons Learned Study, Phase I--Interim Report", draft IDA briefing file anno07427f.ppt, 12 Jan 98, pp. 24, 26, and 27.

[35] Descriptions of these paths are in the *Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review*, Office of the Secretary of Defense, May 1997, pp. 21-22

[36] Interviews. See also "QDR Lessons Learned Study, Phase I--Interim Report", draft IDA briefing file anno07427f.ppt, 12 Jan 98, pp. 18-19

[37] Interviews. See also "QDR Analysis: A Retrospective Look at Joint Staff Participation," RAND Corporation briefing/working paper, November 1997 (QDR Insights v.10), pp. 15

[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 17

Notes

[39] Interviews

[40] Interviews

[41] Interviews. See also "QDR Lessons Learned Study, Phase I--Interim Report", draft IDA briefing file anno07427f.ppt, 12 Jan 98, pp. 25, 26, 27,

[42] Interviews

[43] Interviews

[44] Interviews

[45] Interviews

[46] *The National Defense Panel Assessment of the May 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review*, downloaded Dec 10, 1997 from http://www.defenselink.mil/topstory/ndp_assess.html.

[47] National Defense Authorization Act of 1996, Public Law 104-201, Subtitle B-Force Structure Review, sections 923 and 924. Downloaded from http://www.defenselink.mil/topstory/quad_leg.html, 12/2/97.

[48] Interviews

[49] *Transforming Defense: National Security in the 21st Century. Report of the National Defense Panel, December 1997*.

[50] *Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review*, Office of the Secretary of Defense, May 1997, pp. 1

[51] Interviews. See also "QDR Lessons Learned Study, Phase I--Interim Report", draft IDA briefing file anno07427f.ppt, 12 Jan 98, pp. 18-21, 26-27 and "QDR Analysis: A Retrospective Look at Joint Staff Participation," RAND Corporation briefing/working paper, November 1997 (QDR Insights v.10), pp. 11-12 and 15

[52] Interviews

[53] "Deputy Secretary of Defense John White Outlines Quadrennial Defense Review Before Defense Science Board," OSD (PA) News Release, October 18, 1996. Speech occurred on 9 Oct 96. Downloaded on 27 March 1998 from http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Oct96/b101896_bt594-96.html.

[54] Interviews

[55] Noted both in interviews and in the NDP critique

[56] *Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review*, Office of the Secretary of Defense, May 1997, pp. 13

[57] *Ibid.*, pp. 45

[58] *A National Security Strategy for A New Century*, The White House, May 1997. Downloaded on 27 August 1997 from http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/EOP/NSC/Strategy.

[59] Interviews

[60] *The National Defense Panel Assessment of the May 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review*, downloaded on December 10, 1997 from http://www.defenselink.mil/topstory/ndp_assess.html

[61] "QDR Analysis: A Retrospective Look at Joint Staff Participation," RAND Corporation briefing/working paper, November 1997 (QDR Insights v.10), pp. 12

[62] "QDR Analysis: A Retrospective Look at Joint Staff Participation," RAND Corporation briefing/working paper, November 1997 (QDR Insights v.10), pp. 12

Notes

[63] See Khalilzad and Ochmanek. See also "QDR Analysis: A Retrospective Look at Joint Staff Participation," RAND Corporation briefing, November 1997 (QDR Insights v.10), pp. 34.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

Any planning process aimed at creating an integrated national security strategy will be unique in some fashion. The diverse and complex array of personalities, organizations, adversaries (real and imagined), technological issues, and other factors which can influence the objectives, conduct, and outcome of strategic planning make this a virtual certainty. Fully understanding how just one process unfolded involves a staggering amount of research—often into the realm of murky issues such as personal thoughts of leaders or organizational culture for key groups. The specific details produced by such research will be partly or almost completely irrelevant as soon as one looks at a different case study.

Given this problem, is there any value in studying strategic planning processes? I believe there is—for the same reasons that the study of military history can provide insights into tomorrow's conflicts despite the similar problems with changes in culture, tactics, technologies, and personalities. The key is looking for insights rather than checklists, along with an appreciation for how the differences in context between what one is planning now and what happened in the past may undermine or reinforce these insights.

This study sought to illuminate how the process of strategic planning could influence the results of strategic planning by looking at two specific case studies. Much more research can and should be done to develop any comprehensive theory of strategic planning in general or national security planning in particular. However, insights can be drawn from these two cases as a point of departure for future efforts—whether they involve future QDRs (whatever they may be called) or additional research. In that light, the following insights are offered:

Sequential processes are generally preferable—especially if major changes are anticipated. Carrying out tasks sequentially allows one to follow the classic pattern discussed in chapter one—review the environment, set objectives, derive a broad national security strategy to achieve the objectives, and then design a national military strategy congruent with the overall strategy.

Sequential processes do not preclude feedback. NSC 162 was still being revised when the Everest committee began its work, and the military strategy work done in the QDR (based on an existing national strategy) led in turn to modifications in the 1997 national security strategy.

Even where time pressures force certain actions to be done in parallel, some theme or guidance needs to come first to bind the actions together. The New Look's biggest disconnect occurred when the action officers developing the FY 1955 budget and the Everest Committee followed divergent paths. Deputy Secretary White recognized this challenge when he noted that clear guidance from the Secretary of Defense and/or himself would be necessary for the QDR to produce revolutionary change rather than "status quo plus."

A published design is not required, but it is helpful. One of the factors that helped the QDR meet its deadlines despite the challenges faced during its production was an awareness by all of when decisions had to be made. The more people one has involved, the more having a published plan for all to see can help—and this probably applies even more to a more parallel process where participants are expected to take actions simultaneously.

The New Look showed that one does not have to have a published process design to produce significant changes in national security strategy. However, President Eisenhower had a clear vision of what he wanted to do and which players (the augmented NSC, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, etc.) he needed to bring along to get there. It is easy to envision how divisions between different members of the Joint Chiefs (Ridgway and Twining) or the NSC (Secretary Wilson vs. Secretary Humphrey and Budget Director Dodge) could have brought the New Look to a halt without Eisenhower's direction and participation at key moments.

Clear guidance is important for both top-down and bottom-up processes. Most steps undertaken in the New Look (the Solarium project, the *Sequoia* deliberations, and the Everest Committee) were given clear charters on what their tasks were and what support was available to carry out those tasks. This did not dictate a specific solution; for example, the new Joint Chiefs meeting on the *Sequoia* were given a set of challenges they had to address. It was up to them to derive a solution.

The lack of charters governing how the different QDR panels would work with each other was cited as a source of frustration by several QDR participants. Each panel had a list of objectives and critical questions provided by the Design and Approach briefing of

12 December 1996. However, it seems that either the details on how the panels were to work together were not clearly conveyed to the panels or that some panels felt free to depart from such guidance.

It is generally better to appoint a lead person or organization for a given task rather than dividing responsibility. This principle is familiar to military members as unity of command—making sure that responsibility and accountability are traced to a single individual.

The QDR balanced its panels between co-chairs from OSD and the JS. This meant that smooth functioning of the panel depended to a significant degree on the objectives and personal chemistry between the two leaders. For the most part this seems to have gone well, but some QDR participants did perceive tension between OSD's objectives and those of the JS. These tended to cancel each other out so that neither of their concerns were fully resolved.

Budget timelines will almost always be a factor. Military services get most of their resources from their governments (though exceptions do occur, such as the Chinese People's Liberation Army operating several factories and keeping the profits for military applications). The timelines and details needed to justify military expenditures to its political authority will have to be dealt with somehow—there should, after all, be a link between strategic planning and the resources necessary to carry out the proposed strategy. The questions are how this will occur in the process and how the flexible the budgetary timelines are with respect to the other tasks involved in strategic planning.

The New Look ran into this twice—with the FY 1954 budget (modified between February and April 1953) and the FY 1955 budget. The FY 1954 budget was basically

given short term changes pending completion of the New Look. The FY 1955 budget was more troublesome. The dual track approach adopted between the Everest Committee and the FY 1955 budget preparation may have been inevitable given the time necessary to complete required budgetary details, but it left a gulf between strategy and budget which had to be painfully wrenched back together in early December 1953.

The QDR addressed this factor upfront, and its integration with the budget process allowed for immediate input into the 1997 budget cycle. However, this came at the price of very aggressive QDR timelines. Furthermore, the QDR legislation (which remains in effect) provides a new administration with three extra months to complete the review—which would lead in turn to a compressed budgetary process. The CORM report advocated changes in the DOD budgeting system to make it more flexible for such situations—to explicitly link the strategy review with the budgetary process.[1]

The more changes you want to make, the more top-down and sequential you may need to be. An organization the size of the Department of Defense—much less the entire U.S. government—tends to have a tremendous amount of inertia which has to be overcome if sweeping changes are intended. A sequential process generally allows more time for a consensus to form and disagreements to be openly addressed. This may not achieve "buy-in" from participating organizations or individuals, but it may help produce acquiescence. A more top-down process tends to have a clearer vision—and may have the authority to encourage acceptance of the need for changes.

The Eisenhower administration took office with (in the President's words) a clear "mandate for change." He felt the nation was on the wrong path, with short term decisions risking bankruptcy without providing solid security. A sequential process made

sense because a new national security "team" had to come together and produce a new security (including military) strategy to met these challenges.

The QDR operated from the basis of an existing national security strategy and in an administration already used to working together. These factors helped make a parallel planning process more feasible. The wide participation in the QDR process was intended to help foster additional "buy-in" from different services and agencies.

These insights only scratch the surface of how strategic planning processes may interact. For a more comprehensive analysis, additional research should be taken to flesh out these ideas. Some possible areas of inquiry include: are these insights unique to a U.S. context? To a democracy? How might changes in technology influence planning processes; for example, will a networked world be more conducive to parallel processing and rapid bottom-up changes? Or will the vast amount of inputs make top-down guidance even more important?

Answers to these questions will help guide future planners. The increasing rate of change in today's world suggests that strategies will need to be reviewed on a more frequent basis; at the same time, decisions made today will help shape the options available in the future. Historical experience can never be a perfect guide to future action for strategic planning any more than it can for military operations. But we—and our heirs—will live in the future shaped in part by today's decisions. The insights we gain from the study of past processes make it more likely that the decisions produced by today's efforts will achieve our objectives and shape the future for the better.

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